

Vol. XXX.

APRIL, 1953.

No. 2

# THE AUSTRALASIAN Catholic Record

FOR CLERGY  
AND RELIGIOUS



*The Official Organ for communications issued by the  
Apostolic Delegate to Australasia.*

# Announcements

MSS., queries and books for review, should be addressed to the Editor, St. Patrick's College, Manly, N.S.W.

Queries relating to S. Scripture, Moral Theology, Canon Law, Liturgy, or any subject of professional interest, are cordially invited. Name and address, even if not intended for publication, must accompany all Queries.

Notice of change of address, and correspondence about missing and back numbers, should be addressed to the Manager, St. Patrick's College, Manly, N.S.W.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** *Yearly, in advance, 15/-.*

Remittances should be sent to the Manager or the Diocesan Collector, either by postal order or cheque.

*The clergy of each diocese are invited to appoint one of their number to collect and forward their annual subscriptions.*

The following priests are acting as collectors and representatives for the *Australasian Catholic Record* in their respective dioceses:—  
Archdiocese of Sydney—A.C.R. Staff.

Archdiocese of Perth—Rt. Rev. J. T. McMahon, M.A., Ph.D., South Perth, W.A.

Archdiocese of Wellington—Rev. J. A. Duffy, Military Camp, Waiouru, N.Z.

Archdiocese of Adelaide—Rev. D. O'Connell, Murray Bridge, S.A.

Archdiocese of Brisbane—Rev. V. Carroll, P.P., Kingaroy, Q.

Archdiocese of Hobart—Rev. J. Wallis, Hobart, Tas.

Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn—Rev. J. Blakeney, P.P., Cobargo, N.S.W.

Diocese of Armidale—Rev. J. Healy, Armidale, N.S.W.

Diocese of Auckland—Rt. Rev. L. Buxton, D.C.L., M.A., Hamilton, N.Z.

Diocese of Ballarat—Very Rev. J. H. Gleeson, St. Arnaud, Vic.

Diocese of Bathurst—V. Rev. M. J. Dunne, B.A., Adm. Bathurst, N.S.W.

Diocese of Cairns—V. Rev. J. Tevington, O.S.A., P.P., Innisfail, Q.

Diocese of Christchurch—V. Rev. T. Liddy, Adm., Christchurch, N.Z.

Diocese of Darwin—Rev. W. Henschke, M.S.C., Darwin, N.T.

Diocese of Dunedin—Rev. A. Loughnan, Dunedin, N.Z.

Diocese of Geraldton—Rev. N. Tobin, Cathedral, Geraldton, W.A.

Diocese of Lismore—V. Rev. T. Morris, P.P., Smithtown, N.S.W.

Diocese of Maitland—Rev. T. Cronin, Sandgate, N.S.W.

Diocese of Port Augusta—Very Rev. W. P. Kain, Pekina, S.A.

Diocese of Rockhampton—V. Rev. P. J. Walsh, D.D., Adm., Rockhampton, Q.

Diocese of Sale—V. Rev. J. Fitzpatrick, Leongatha, V.

Diocese of Sandhurst—Rev. J. Hussey, Adm., Wangaratta, V.

Diocese of Toowoomba—Rev. M. Mahon, Adm., Warwick, Q.

Diocese of Townsville—Very Rev. K. J. H. Kelly, D.D., Ayr, Q.

Diocese of Wagga—V. Rev. J. Larkins, P.P., Junee, N.S.W.

Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes—Very Rev. Dean J. Sexton, V.F., Nyngan, N.S.W.

Diocese of Wollongong—Rev. W. J. Neilson, Thirroul, N.S.W.

Editor:

V.Rev. Mgr. T. VEECH.

Manager: REV. F. A. MECHAM,  
St. Patrick's College, Manly, N.S.W.



# The Australasian Catholic Record

A Quarterly Publication under Ecclesiastical Sanction

*"Pro Ecclesia Dei." St. Augustine.*

## Contents:

### OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS,

Rev. William Leonard, D.D., D.S.S. 93

Apostolic Constitution on the Eucharistic Fast—Instruction of Holy Office on Eucharistic Fast.

### THE SACRAMENT OF GLORY,

Rev. Cornelius Roberts, D.D., Ph.D. 105

THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN—A EUCHARISTIC  
SURVEY . . . . Rev. William Leonard, D.D., D.S.S. 112

### BISHOP WILLSON, XV,

Right Rev. Mgr. John H. Cullen, V.G. 124

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY . . Rev. Thomas Muldoon, D.D. 132

The Eucharistic Mystery and its credibility.

MORAL THEOLOGY, Right Rev. Mgr. James Madden, D.D. 140

The Eucharistic Fast.

CANON LAW . . Right Rev. Mgr. James Carroll, D.C.L., P.P. 152

Time of Easter Communion—Making good omission of Easter Communion—Part of faithful in Eucharistic Sacrifice.

LITURGY . . . . . Rev. Patrick Murphy, D.D. 158

Absolution before and blessing after distribution of communion outside of Mass—Tabernacle Veil—Recent decrees of S.C. of Rites—Commentary on Mass of the Blessed Sacrament.

HOMILETICS . . . . . Rev. Patrick Murphy, D.D. 164

The Eucharist a bond of fraternal charity.

NOTES . . . . . 167

The New Catholic Commentary.

BOOK REVIEWS . . . . . 169

*Satan* (Bruno); *The Heart of St. Therese* (Combes); *The Transactions of the Catholic Medical Guild of St. Luke* (Ed. N.S.W. Branch); *Woman to-day* (Fitzsimons); *The Divinization of Man according to Saint Hilary of Poitiers* (Wild); *The Grace of Guadalupe* (Keyes).

**Nihil Obstat :**

RICHARDUS COLLENDER

CENSOR DEPUTATUS.

**Imprimatur :**

✠ N.T. CARD. GILROY,

ARCHIEP. SYDNEYENSIS.

1a die, Aprilis, 1953.

# Official Documents

## PAPAL ACTS

### APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION

*on the discipline to be observed in regard to the Eucharistic Fast*  
(A.A.S., 1953, n. 1)

PIUS BISHOP SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD  
*for perpetual remembrance.*

Christ our Lord, "the same night in which he was betrayed", celebrated for the last time the Pasch of the Old Law, and when the supper was finished, He gave bread to his disciples, saying: "This is my body which shall be delivered for you"; and likewise He handed them a cup, saying: "This is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many", "Do this in commemoration of me". From these passages of Holy Writ it is quite evident that the Divine Redeemer wished to replace this last paschal celebration, in which a lamb was eaten according to the rites of the Hebrews, with a new pasch that should remain till the end of the world, a Pasch in which His followers should eat the Immaculate Lamb, to be immolated for the life of the world. Thus the new Pasch of the new Law was to terminate the old Pasch—the reality was to end the shadow.

While the two suppers were thus joined, in order that the passage from the old Pasch to the new might be significantly shown forth, one can easily conceive why the Church, in renewing the Eucharistic Sacrifice by order of the Divine Redeemer and in commemoration of Him, could have departed from the custom of the ancient agape and introduced a Eucharistic fast.

Really from very early times the custom established itself of administering the Eucharist to the faithful who came fasting (Ben. XIV, *De Syn. Dioec.*, l. 6, ch. 8, n. 10). At the end of the fourth century, fasting was already enjoined by various Councils on those who were about to celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Thus, in the year 393, the Council of Hippo decreed that "the Sacrament of the altar must not be celebrated except by those who are fasting". This precept was promulgated once more a little later, that is, in the year 399 by the Third Council of Carthage. At the beginning of the fifth century the custom of the Eucharistic Fast was a rather common observance and may well be called immemorial. Hence St. Augustine states that the Holy Euchar-



ist is always received by those who are fasting, and remarks that the custom obtains throughout the whole world (Ep. LIV *ad Ian.*, c. 6).

This practice undoubtedly rested on grave reasons, amongst which that one should be especially remembered which the Apostle of the Gentiles notes with sorrow in dealing with the fraternal agape of the Christians (I Cor. XI, 21 f.). Certainly abstinence from food and drink goes fittingly with that supreme reverence which we owe to the sovereign majesty of Jesus Christ, when we are about to receive Him hidden under Eucharistic veils. Besides, when we nourish ourselves on His Precious Body and Blood, before we take any other food, we show that He is the first and chief nutriment by which our soul is nourished, and its holiness strengthened. Consequently the same Augustine reminds us: "It pleased the Holy Spirit that, in honour of so great a Sacrament, the Body of the Lord should enter the mouth of a Christian before all other foods" (*loco citato*).

Not only does the fast pay a debt of honour to the Divine Redeemer, but it also fosters piety and it is consequently calculated to increase those wholesome fruits of holiness which Christ the Source and Author of all good things wishes to see elicited by us when we are enriched with grace.

Moreover, it is a matter of common experience that by the very laws of our human constitution the mind rises with greater agility to higher things, when the body is not burdened with food. We all recognise that the mind in those conditions is moved by greater spiritual energy to meditate that hidden and sublime mystery which is enacted in the soul as in a temple, with consequent increase of divine charity.

The great care with which the Church has surrounded the observance of the Eucharistic fast can be seen also from the grave penalties which she imposed on those who violated the precept. The seventh Council of Toledo held in the year 646 threatened with excommunication anyone who celebrated Mass after breaking his fast; earlier still the third Council of Braga (572) and the second Council of Macon had decreed that anyone guilty of this violation should be deposed from his position of charge and honour.

Nevertheless, in the course of the centuries, careful consideration was given to particular conditions. It was sometimes judged opportune on account of such circumstances to relax somewhat this law of fast, as far as the faithful were concerned. Hence the Council of Constance in the year 1415, while confirming this very venerable law, also added a

certain mitigation, when it decreed thus: "The authority of the Sacred Canons as well as the praiseworthy and approved custom of the Church has maintained and maintains that this sacrament must not be celebrated after supper, nor received by the faithful when not fasting, unless in the case of sickness or some other necessity granted or admitted by law or by the Church".

We have thought well to recall these facts, so that all may see clearly that, although new conditions of our times and of existing circumstances move Us to grant several faculties and relaxations in this matter, We purpose nevertheless by these Apostolic Letters to confirm the substance of the existing law and the force of existing custom in regard to the Eucharistic fast. We expressly desire to admonish those who can obey the law to continue to do so with all diligence, so that only those who are placed in necessity can enjoy these concessions, in the proportion of that same necessity.

It is a cause of consolation and pleasure to Us—We wish to say so briefly here—that We are witnessing a daily increase in the piety of the faithful towards the August Sacrament of the altar—a piety not only manifested in individual practice, but also in the outward splendour of divine worship, and in frequent public manifestations throughout the nations. This is doubtless due in no small measure to the solicitous care of the Supreme Pontiffs, and especially to that of Blessed Pius X. This holy Pontiff called his children to renew the primitive practice of the Church, exhorting them to approach the table of Angels as frequently as possible, and even every day, if they can (*Decr. Sacra Tridentina Synodus*, Dec. 20, 1905). Inviting the little ones also to this heavenly banquet he wisely laid down that the precept of Confession and Holy Communion is binding on those who have attained the use of reason (*Decree Quam singulari*, Aug. 8, 1910). This same legislation is enforced by the Code of Canon Law (can. 863; cfr. can. 854, § 5). To the solicitude of the Roman Pontiffs the faithful gave a loyal and willing response flocking in greater numbers and with greater frequency to the Holy Table. Would that this sacred hunger for the heavenly Bread and this sacred thirst for the Divine Blood should be intensified in everyone of every age and in all classes of Society.

It is to be noted, however, that the times in which we live and the special conditions of the times have introduced many new things into social usage and into the general activity of human life—things that entail difficulties which might possibly keep people from participating



in the divine mysteries, if the law of Eucharistic fast had to be obeyed in the same way in which its observance has been regulated up to the present.

In the first place it is evident to all that the clergy are unequal to all the heavy tasks which the needs of the faithful demand. The work which they have to do, especially on feast days, is excessively burdensome, for they must celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice at a late hour; they must often celebrate two or three Masses in one day; and they are sometimes obliged to make a long journey, in order that some considerable portions of their flock be not left without Mass. Surely those enervating apostolic labours weaken the health of priests, and that all the more inasmuch as, besides saying Mass and giving a homily on the Gospel, they must also attend with increasing care and increasing labour to the hearing of confessions and to the imparting of catechetical instruction; nor is this all—they have to give diligent consideration and deliberation to all those plans and affairs which the hard battle against God and His Church demands—a battle which is being waged against the Church so widely to-day and with such craftiness and fierceness.

But our mind and heart flies especially to those who, far from their native land are labouring in distant countries in generous response to the invitation and order of the Divine Master Who said: "Go, teach all nations"; we mean the Missionaries who, after the heaviest labours and after journeys involving every sort of difficulty, strive with every effort to set the light of the Christian religion before all men and nourish their flocks, often very young in the Catholic faith, with that angelic food which nourishes virtue and piety.

In almost the same position are those faithful who in not a few missionary regions or elsewhere have not their own priest, but must await the arrival of another priest till a late hour, in order to be able to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and nourish themselves with the divine food from the altar.

Besides, since the introduction of machinery of every sort, it often happens that not a few persons who work in factories or in transport services, at harbour duties, or at works of public utility are engaged not only by day but also by night in shifts, in such a way that their bodily strength is weakened and they are in such need of some nourishment that they are hindered from approaching the Eucharistic Table fasting.

Similarly, mothers of families often cannot come to Holy Communion, before they have done the housework, which often requires several hours of labour.



It happens, likewise, that in schools of boys and girls and places of education there are many who wish to answer that divine invitation: "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me" and who are full of confidence that He "who feeds amongst lilies" will preserve their innocence and fortify their moral life against the enticements of their youth and the snares of the world; but at the same time it is, in certain cases, exceedingly difficult for them, before going to school, to get to the Church, there receive the Bread of Angels, and then return home for breakfast.

In our time also (it should be noted) it is not a rare sight to see great multitudes of people going from one place to another, during afternoon hours, to attend religious celebrations or take part in conferences on social matters; if, therefore, it were allowed on those occasions to arrange the celebration of the Eucharistic Mysteries, wherein the life-giving fountain of divine grace becomes operative as a force for the increase of virtue, there is no doubt that the results would be salutary—the Eucharist being a source of new strength to think and act in a christian way and in a spirit of obedience to law.

To these special considerations it is well to add a consideration which regards everybody. Although in this age the medical art and hygienic practice have made great progress, notably diminishing the death-rate, especially amongst children, nevertheless, the conditions of present-day life and the consequences of the frightful wars of this century are such that they have weakened in no small degree the fibre and the health of people generally.

For these reasons, and especially in view of arousing, facilitating and increasing Eucharistic piety, not a few Bishops from various nations have respectfully petitioned that this law of fast may be mitigated somewhat; and the Apostolic See has already graciously granted special faculties and relaxations in the matter to priests and people. Amongst those concessions We gladly mention the Decree *Post editum*, given in favour of the sick by the Sacred Congregation of the Council (Dec. 7, 1906), and the Letters given on May 22, 1923, to the local Ordinaries, by the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, in favour of priests.

Latterly petitions from Bishops on this matter have become more frequent and more urgent. Accordingly, more ample faculties were granted, especially those given so generously during the war. All this evidently indicates that new and serious, permanent and rather general causes are present, which make it exceedingly difficult, in a great variety

of circumstances, for priests to celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice and for the faithful to receive the Bread of Angels fasting.

Consequently, wishing to meet these grave inconveniences and difficulties, and desiring to keep variations of indults from leading to discrepancies which would greatly mar uniformity of practice, We consider it necessary to mitigate the discipline of the Eucharistic fast, and establish a mode of observance which will suit the requirements of the times and the conditions of the faithful, so that obedience to the law may be easily possible to all. In decreeing this change, We feel confident that We may be able to contribute greatly to the increase of Eucharistic piety, and that all will be hereby moved and stimulated to participate of the Table of Angels, with undoubted advancement of the glory of God and of the holiness of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ.

All that follows hereunder We therefore decree and ordain by Apostolic authority :

I. The law of Eucharistic fast from midnight continues in force for all those not placed in the special conditions which We are about to set forth in these Apostolic Letters. Henceforth, however, it shall be a general and common principle for all, both priests and faithful, that natural water does not break the Eucharistic fast.

II. Sick persons, even if not confined to bed, can, on the prudent advice of a confessor, take something in the form of drink or of real medicine, excepting alcoholic beverages. The same faculty is given to sick priests who are to celebrate Mass.

III. Priests who are to celebrate at late hours, or after heavy work in the exercise of their sacred ministry, can take something in the form of drink, excluding alcoholic beverages ; but they must abstain from any such drink at least for the space of one hour before Mass.

IV. Priests who celebrate Mass twice or three times can take the ablutions, but in this case wine may not be used for the ablutions but water only.

V. The faithful likewise—even those not sick—who on account of grave inconvenience, that is, on account of debilitating work, on account of the late hour at which they must receive Holy Communion, or on account of a long journey, cannot observe a complete fast before Holy Communion, may, on the prudent advice of a confessor, while this necessity lasts, take something in the form of drink, excluding alcoholic beverages. They must, however, abstain for at least one hour, before they receive the Bread of Angels.



VI. If circumstances render it necessary, We grant local Ordinaries the power of permitting the celebration of Mass in the evening, but such Masses must not begin before four o'clock in the afternoon. The permission extends to feasts of obligation existing at present, to feasts formerly of obligation, also to the first Fridays of each month, and finally to those solemnities which are celebrated with a great concourse of people, and also (besides those days) to one week-day. In this case of evening Mass the priest must observe a fast of three hours from solid food and alcoholic drinks, and of one hour from other drinks not alcoholic. In these Masses the faithful may go to Communion under the same three-hour condition of Eucharistic fast, with due regard to the law proclaimed in canon 857.

To heralds of the Gospel in Mission Territories, considering the very special conditions in which they are placed, mostly making it impossible for priests to visit remote stations except rarely, the local Ordinaries can grant these same faculties for the other days of the week also.

The local Ordinaries, however, shall be most careful to preclude any interpretation which amplifies the faculties here given, careful also to prevent every abuse and irreverence in the matter. Really, in giving these faculties which the conditions of persons, places and times demand to-day, We wish to insist on the importance of the Eucharistic fast and to confirm its force and efficacy in regard to those who are to receive the Divine Redeemer hidden under the Eucharistic veils. Besides, as often as bodily inconvenience diminishes, the soul should do its best to supply either by internal penance or in other ways according to the traditional custom of the church. Whenever the church mitigates fast, it is her custom to enjoin the fulfilment of other works. Consequently, those who are entitled to use these faculties, should raise more fervent prayers to heaven, adoring God, thanking Him, and especially making atonement for their sins and imploring new helps from above. All should realize very thoroughly that the Eucharist is "the perennial memorial of Christ's Passion" (St. Thomas Aq. opusc. 57)—instituted as such by Jesus Christ Himself—and should accordingly provoke those sentiments of Christian humility and Christian penitence which meditation on the torments and death of the Divine Redeemer normally call forth. Since also the Divine Redeemer perpetually immolates Himself on our altars and thus renews the supreme manifestation of His love, the faithful should offer to Him in return more and more abundant fruits of fraternal charity towards their neighbours. In this way all will con-

tribute to the greater daily realization of that ideal of the Apostle of the Gentiles: Because the Bread is one, we, though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one Bread”.

Whatsoever things are contained in these Letters We wish to be, one and all, firm, ratified, and valid—all things to the contrary notwithstanding, even if worthy of special mention; hereby also all other privileges and faculties are abolished, however they were granted by the Holy See, that all everywhere may uniformly keep this discipline with due obedience.

All things laid down above shall be in force from the day of promulgation in the *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*.

Given at Rome, from St. Peter's, in the year of the Lord one thousand nine hundred and fifty three, the sixth day of the month of January, on the epiphany of the Lord, in the fourteenth year of Our Pontificate,

PIUS XII POPE.

✱

✱

✱

✱

## SUPREME SACRED CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY OFFICE

### *Instruction*

### *on the discipline of the Eucharistic fast*

The Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus*, issued this very day by the Supreme Pontiff Pius XII happily reigning, grants several faculties and permissions in regard to the observance of the Eucharistic fast. His Holiness, at the same time, confirms for the most part the regulations of the Code of Canon Law and leaves the substance of those regulations untouched (can. 808 and 858 § 1). The existing law is to be kept by all priests and faithful who can observe it. But for these also the mitigation granted to all now applies, namely, that *natural water* (that is, water without the addition of any element whatsoever) does not break the Eucharistic fast (Const. No. 1). All the other concessions are available only to priests and faithful who are placed in the particular conditions envisaged by the Constitution or who take part in evening Masses authorised by local Ordinaries within the limits of the new faculties accorded to them.

In order that the regulations affecting such concessions may be uniformly observed everywhere, in order to exclude every interpretation which amplifies the faculties now given, and in order that every



abuse in the matter may be avoided, this Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, by express command of the Supreme Pontiff gives the following norms:

*For the sick faithful and priests*

Const. n. II.

1. The faithful who are sick, though not confined to bed, can take something in the form of drink, excluding alcoholic drinks, if, on account of their sickness they cannot without real inconvenience, remain fasting up to the time of Holy Communion; they can also take something in the form of medicine whether it be liquid (but not alcoholic) or solid, provided there is question of medicine proper, ordered by the physician or commonly regarded as such in every case. Let it be kept in mind that any solid whatsoever taken as nourishment cannot be regarded as medicine proper.

2. The conditions necessary to enjoy this dispensation from the fast—a dispensation for which no limit of time before Communion is prescribed—must be prudently considered by the confessor, and without his advice no one can avail himself of it. The confessor can give his advice either in the internal sacramental forum or in the external extra-sacramental forum, and may give it once only for the duration of the same conditions of sickness.

3. Sick priests, even if not confined to bed, can avail themselves automatically of the dispensation, whether they intend to celebrate Holy Mass or intend to receive Holy Communion only.

*For priests placed in particular circumstances*

(Const. n. III and IV)

4. Priests who are not sick but who celebrate a) at a late hour (that is, after 9 o'clock), b) or after heavy work in the sacred ministry (for example, from the first hours of the morning or for a long time), c) or after a long journey (at least two kilometers—a mile and a quarter—on foot, and proportionately longer, according to the means of locomotion employed, taking account of the difficulty of the road and the condition of the person), can take something in the form of drink, excluding alcoholic drinks.

5. The three cases numbered above are such as to comprise all the circumstances for which the legislator intends to grant the said faculty, excluding every interpretation tending to amplify the concession.

6. Priests who find themselves in these conditions can take some-

thing in the form of drink, one or more times, but only up to an hour before the beginning of Holy Mass.

7. Independently of the other concessions of the Constitution, all priests who binate or trinate can, in the first Masses, take the two ablutions prescribed by the rubrics of the Missal using, however, water only, in application of the general principle that water does not break the fast.

But the priest who celebrates his Masses one after the other, as on Christmas day and the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, must observe the rubrics regarding the ablutions.

8. Should it happen that the priest, who must binate or trinate, through inadvertence takes the ablutions with wine, he shall not be prohibited to celebrate the second or third Mass.

*For the Faithful placed in special circumstances*  
(Const. n. V).

9. The faithful also who, though not sick, *cannot on account of some other grave inconvenience* observe the Eucharistic fast, are granted the permission to approach the Holy Table, after having taken something in the form of drink up to an hour before Holy Communion, alcoholic drinks being always excluded.

10. The cases in which *the grave inconvenience* required is verified (excluding every amplification) are specified in three categories:

a) *Debilitating work* before Holy Communion.

Hereunder are comprised the cases of workmen who, employed in factories, in transport, in shipping labour or in other public services are occupied in shifts by day and by night; those who on duties of their profession or of charity spend the night awake (nurses, the personnel of hospitals, night watchmen, etc.); women with child and housewives who, before they can go to church, must attend for a long time to housework, etc.

b) *The late hour at which Communion is received.*

Here come the cases of the faithful who only at a late hour find it possible to have amongst them a priest to celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice; children for whom it is too hard to go to church, receive Communion, return home for breakfast, and then go to school, etc.

c) *A long journey to be made to reach the church.*

There must be question of at least two kilometers of road (a mile and a quarter), if the journey is made on foot, or a distance proportionately longer, if made with means of locomotion, taking account of



the difficulties of the road and of the conditions of the person (See above, n. 4).

11. The reasons of grave inconvenience must be prudently weighed by the confessor in the sacramental or non-sacramental forum; without his advice the faithful cannot receive Holy Communion unless they are fasting. Such advice of the confessor may also be given once only for the duration of the cause of grave inconvenience.

### *Evening Masses*

(Const. n. VII).

The constitution grants to local Ordinaries (can. 198) the faculty to authorize the celebration of evening Masses in their territory, when this is rendered necessary by circumstances, notwithstanding can. 821 § 1. The common good does sometimes require the celebration of the sacred mysteries in the afternoon: for example, for workmen in certain industries in which turns of work succeed each other even on feast days; for certain categories of workers who are occupied in the morning of a feast day (for example, shipping hands); on the occasion of gatherings of a religious or social character, in which a great multitude of faithful participate, coming from distant places, etc.

12. Such Masses, however, can only be celebrated after four o'clock of the afternoon, and the Ordinary can permit them only on the following occurrences, rigorously (*tassativamente*) enumerated:

- a) holidays of obligation now existing according to can. 1247 § 1;
- b) suppressed holidays of obligation, according to the Index published by the Sacred Congregation of the Council (Dec. 28, 1919; *A.A.S.*, XII [1920], p. 42-43);
- c) Solemnities that are celebrated with a great concourse of people;
- e) One day of the week besides those enumerated above, when this is necessary for determined categories of people.

13. Priests who celebrate Mass in the afternoon, as also the faithful who on such an occasion go to Holy Communion, can *during the meal* which is permitted up to three hours before the beginning of the Mass or the Communion take, *with becoming moderation*, the alcoholic drinks usually taken during meals (for example, wine, beer, etc., always excluding liquor (spirituous drinks). Before or after such a meal they can take, always excluding alcoholic drinks of any kind, something in the form of drink up to an hour before Mass or Communion.

14. Priests cannot celebrate Mass in the morning and evening of the same day, if they have not explicit permission to binate or trinate, according to canon 806.

The faithful can never go to Communion on the morning and evening of the same day, in accordance with canon 857.

15. All the faithful, even if they do not belong to the categories for whom the evening Mass has been established, are quite free to go to Communion during the Mass, or immediately before or immediately after (cfr. canon 846, § 1). They must observe, however, the regulations set forth above in regard to the Eucharistic fast.

16. In territories where the law that obtains is not the *ius commune* but *ius missionum*, the Ordinaries can permit, on the same conditions, evening Masses on all days of the week.

#### *Notices for execution*

17. The Ordinaries must take vigilant care that every abuse and every irreverence towards the Blessed Sacrament be avoided.

18. They must also be watchful that the new discipline be uniformly observed by all. Let them also make known to their subjects that all special faculties and dispensations heretofore granted by the Holy See, whether territorial or personal, are now abrogated.

19. The Constitution and the present Instruction must be interpreted in faithful adherence to the text, to the avoidance of all amplification of the concessions already so generous. With regard to eventual customs, which would differ from the new discipline, let the abrogative clause be kept in mind: "notwithstanding anything to the contrary, even if worthy of most special mention".

22. Let Ordinaries and priests take advantage of this benevolent concession of the Holy See to exhort the faithful to assist frequently at Holy Mass, to go to Holy Communion. Let them likewise promote, by opportune means and especially by preaching, that spiritual good, in view of which the Holy Father has issued the Constitution.

The Supreme Pontiff, in approving the present Instruction has given orders that it be promulgated by publication in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* together with the Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus*.

From the Palace of the Holy Office, January 6, 1953.

+ J. Card. PIZZARDO, *Secretary*.  
A. Ottaviani, *Assessor*.

W. LEONARD.



# The Sacrament of Glory

*Summary:* Our fruition of God in heaven is one of the realities signified by the Blessed Eucharist, as the Liturgy and the Council of Trent affirm. This sacramental symbolism harmonises admirably with the commemorative and present significations, making the sacrament's redemptive import complete. Moreover, it accords with the magnitude of the fact of the Real Presence. Our Lord declared that eternal life was caused by the Eucharist. When instituting this sacrament, He evidently intended to prefigure a glorious reunion with Him in His heavenly kingdom.

The glory of heaven is not only signified but (probably) caused as well, by the Eucharist. This amounts to saying that the sacrament is the cause of first grace, and of our incorporation in the mystical body of Christ.

The excellence of the Blessed Eucharist, while consisting principally in the Real Presence of Christ, may be seen also in its manifold symbolism. This sacrament primarily signifies the adorable Body and Blood which the form denotes, and hence it is most correctly called the *Sacramentum Corporis et Sanguinis Christi*, but its sacramental signification is more extensive than that. Christ present may be considered as one with the sacrament, and, if so, the question still remains, What then does the Blessed Eucharist signify, or symbolize?

St. Thomas answers that the Blessed Eucharist symbolizes three things. "This sacrament," he writes, "has a triple signification. One in relation to the past, insofar as the sacrament commemorates the Lord's Passion, which was a true sacrifice; and hence its name, *Sacrifice*. A second signification relates it to the present effect, which is the unity of the Church, into which men are aggregated through this sacrament; and hence it is called *Communion*, or *Synaxis*, for St. John Damascene says (in Bk. 4) that it is called Communion because through it we are united with Christ, partaking of His Body and Blood, and because through it we commune with, and are united with, one another. *It has a third signification in respect of the future, insofar as this sacrament prefigures the future enjoyment of God in heaven.* For this last reason it is called *Viaticum*, because it affords us the means of reaching heaven. For the same reason, too, it is called *Eucharist*, which means "good grace," because *the* grace of God is eternal life, as Rom. vi. affirms, and it could be called this also by reason of its containing Christ, who is full of grace" (S.T., III. 73, 4).

The subject of this article is the prognostic symbolism of the Eucharist, in other words, the fact that the Eucharist prefigures our future enjoyment of God in heaven. A Corpus Christi antiphon states our

theme exactly: "O sacrum convivium in quo Christus sumitur : recolitur memoria passionis ejus; mens impletur gratia: et *futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.*" More authoritative still is the statement by the Council of Trent that Christ intended the Blessed Eucharist to be the pledge of our glory to come and of perpetual bliss: "Pignus praeterea id esse voluit futurae nostrae gloriae et perpetuae felicitatis." (D. 875).

Every instructed Catholic knows that the consecration establishes a connection with heaven to this extent, that He who is in the sanctuary of heaven, "ever living to make intercession for us," becomes present under the sacramental veils without any intrinsic alteration. When we adore the Sacred Host we adore One who is present on the altar and in heaven without any shadow of otherness, and thus the Blessed Sacrament is a real link between heaven and earth and should remind everyone that we are destined to be where Christ is seen without disguise.

It is ordinary knowledge, too, that Holy Communion is designed to sustain us as the food of our pilgrimage, until we reach the threshold of heaven. By intensifying the love of God in our hearts it strengthens us against the enemies of our salvation and enables us to persevere.

More than all this, however, is now being claimed for the Blessed Eucharist. It is certainly a *sign* of heavenly glory, and we believe also, without claiming certainty for the belief, that it *causes* in us that future reality which it signifies. We shall consider in order what is certain and what is a matter of opinion.

The prognostic symbolism is not extraneous to the commemorative and present significations. If the Eucharist symbolizes Christ's redemptive death in the past, and also sanctifying grace, which is the present effect of His death, it is very appropriate that it should symbolize the ultimate and chief effect of Redemption, namely, our enjoyment of God in heaven. Thus is the redemptive significance of the Eucharist complete and perfect.

God's supreme gift to mankind is His admitting us to share the incomparable happiness of His God-life in heaven, which is nothing less than a true *consortium divinae naturae*. As soon as we mortals grasp, however inadequately, the immensity of that gift we see that the Eucharist on earth is proportioned to it. To the great thing in heaven there corresponds a great sacrament on earth. If first a man realized the grandeur of eternal salvation, he would not be surprised to find that there existed so great a sacrament as the Eucharist. Vice-versa, if first he knew the magnitude of this sacrament he could scarcely be astonished

to learn the grandeur of the reward which God has prepared for them that love him. In early English law, a person could pledge his body as a security for the performance of a promise: it was the best guarantee he could possibly give. Our Blessed Lord has done precisely that. To assure us of the reality of the almost incredible reward promised to His faithful servants He has made His Body and Blood the pledge of it unto all generations.

The sublime discourse recorded in John vi. promised a Food which was heavenly on two counts. First, it truly came down from God's heaven (vi, 33); and second, it would impart true life, imperishable, heavenly ("If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever... He that eateth my Flesh and drinketh my Blood hath everlasting life and I will raise him up on the last day"—vi, 52, 55). What is here promised together with the Eucharist, and as its effect, is a supernatural life that is principally the life of glory, to be shared with Christ in his eschatological kingdom. Sanctifying grace is of course included, for it is the seed of glory, but the principal object promised is life eternal in the final and definitive kingdom of God. That life, He emphatically asserted, is caused by the Eucharist, the Bread of Life, which in some way, therefore, must be the Sacrament of Glory.

At the Last Supper, the promised Sacrament of Life was instituted. Christ's own soul was ever filled with the blessed vision of the Godhead which the elect were called to share with Him in the future. The time had now come to make that inheritance possible and to establish in the Saviour's redeeming Blood a kingdom on earth which gave access to the everlasting kingdom in heaven. In such solemn circumstances He spoke these memorable words: "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer. For I say to you that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." The account proceeds: "And having taken the chalice, he gave thanks and said: Take and divide it among you, for I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the kingdom of God come" (Luke, xxii, 15-18). So far in the narrative the Christian Eucharist has not been mentioned, and 'the kingdom of God' may mean no more than the messianic kingdom on earth, Christ's Church, which was soon to be inaugurated at that same Supper with the Eucharistic offering of His Body and Blood, when truth dispelled the shadows.

"And taking bread, he gave thanks and brake and gave to them, saying: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for a com-



memoration of me. In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in my Blood, which shall be shed for you" (Luke, xxii, 19, 20). As the Christian Church is midway between the Church of the Old Testament and the heavenly Sion, so the Eucharist, which was foreshadowed in the old Paschal rite, prefigures in its turn the royal feast of the redeemed in heaven—the *regias Agni dapes*. A meal in common, with its intimacy and its sharing of enjoyment, is a recognized token of fellowship. How strikingly did that sacred Supper, which Christ had longed to celebrate, represent the glorious reunion when His followers would be admitted to enjoy with Him the inheritance due to Himself as Son of God.

Scarcely had our Lord instituted the pledge of heavenly glory and ordered it to be observed, when He deplored that one of the Twelve would betray Him, and then had occasion to chide them all for a vain-glorious contention and, finally, to reprove St. Peter for presumption. It is a revealing commentary on human nature that in this supreme hour our Divine Saviour had to interrupt these exhibitions of frailty in order to make the magnificent pronouncement: "And I dispose to you, as my Father has disposed to me, a kingdom; *that you may eat and drink at my table* in my kingdom: and may sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke, xxii, 29, 30).

The *Coena Domini* represented Christ's impending death, certainly, but it also looked, as our Lord Himself then did, beyond Calvary, to the ultimate fruit of the Cross—"that you may eat and drink at my table." There will be yet another Supper, the very last because the eternal feast, where the elect will partake of the Godhead *revelata facie*. The Eucharistic Supper, whether celebrated by Christ or by His ministers, bears a figurative resemblance to that future state which our Lord was pleased to describe as a feast. In this way, the Eucharist is the sacramental sign of future glory because in its sensible aspect it shows forth by Christ's appointment the blessed state of glory under exactly the same figure as Christ's words represented that state.

This truly wonderful sacrament at once commemorates the Passion and prognosticates its ultimate effect. If it is sorrowful as a memorial of the bitter price Christ paid to save us, it is joyful because of the glory which He won and which it imports. That is a very good reason why the Mass should make us, as the Liturgy bids, lift up our hearts. Joyful anticipation is often a special feature of the Postcommunion prayers, and the Corpus Christi Postcommunion means heaven when it says:

“Fac nos, quaesumus, Domine, *divinitatis tuae sempiterna fruitione repleri*, quam pretiosi corporis et sanguinis tui temporalis perceptio prae-figurat.”

Let no one imagine that the fact of Christ's presence excludes the symbolism we speak of. Rather is His presence the guarantee of what the Sacrament promises, as already remarked. St. John Damascene has a pertinent observation on the co-existence of type and reality in the Eucharistic *sacramenta*: “They are called types of future things not because they are not truly the Body and Blood of Christ, but because Christ's Godhead, of which we now partake through them, we shall then partake of in untrammelled vision” (*De Fide Orth.*, iv, 13).

We take it as now sufficiently evident that the Eucharist is the sign of glory.

If it signifies heavenly glory, does it also cause it? This has still to be considered. To cause glory, the Eucharist would have to cause sanctifying grace the first time a person gets that grace. St. Thomas Aquinas holds that it does so: it not merely increases supernatural life but even imparts life in the first instance. This does not mean that the Blessed Eucharist should be received before Baptism—of course not—but that Baptism itself is objectively so related to the Eucharist that the recipient of Baptism tacitly pledges himself to receive, and thus has a *votum* of, the greater sacrament. “Nobody has grace before the reception of this sacrament except through some *votum* of it,” writes the Angelic Doctor, “whether on one's own part, in the case of adults, or on the part of the Church, in the case of infants. So great is the efficacy of this sacrament that its very *votum* obtains for a person the grace that brings spiritual life” (S.T., III. 79, 1 ad 1). A full discussion on the necessity of the Eucharist for salvation is not possible here, but an article on the subject may be seen in the *Australasian Catholic Record* of October, 1930, in which it was claimed that the Bread of Life is the sacramental cause of life *simpliciter*. No more than probability was attached to that conclusion, but it is strongly confirmed by the doctrine now presented, that the same sacrament is the sacramental sign of glory and hence presumably it is the cause of glory. This is only an application of the general principle that sacraments effect what they signify: they are practical, efficacious signs.

The same conclusion is reached when we consider the Blessed Eucharist in relation to unity amongst true Christians. St. Thomas calls it “the sacrament of ecclesiastical unity.” This unity, he says, is

had only imperfectly in this life and perfectly in the state of glory (S.T., III. 79. 2). St. Paul attributes the unity which exists among the members of Christ's mystical body to the oneness of the real Body which all receive. Literally, his words were: "Because there is one Bread, we, being many, are one body: for we all partake of the one Bread" (I Cor., x, 17). Not a few Fathers saw unity suggested in the *materia* of the sacrament: the bread being a unity composed from many grains and the wine likewise being made from many grapes. St. Augustine's exclamation is well known: "O sacramentum pietatis, O signum unitatis, O vinculum caritatis." (In Jo. tr. 26, 13).

For St. Thomas, the unity of the Church was the sacrament's special effect *in praesenti*, and that, he said, accounted for the name *Communion*. "*Aliam autem significationem habet respectu rei praesentis, scilicet, ecclesiasticae unitatis, cui homines aggregantur per hoc sacramentum; et secundum hoc nominatur Communio, vel Synaxis. . . . quia communicamus per ipsam Christo. . . . et quia communicamus et unimur ad invicem per ipsam*" (S.T., III. 73, 4).

Now, the union which the Eucharist causes is that of the mystical body, a unity which is imperfect on earth and made perfect in heaven; and accordingly the Council of Trent makes this sacrament the pledge principally of the heavenly union when it teaches: "Pignus praeterea id esse voluit futurae nostrae gloriae et perpetuae felicitatis, adeoque symbolum unius illius corporis, cujus ipse caput existit, cuique nos, tamquam membra, artissima fidei, spei et caritatis conexione adstrictos esse voluit, ut id ipsum omnes diceremus, nec essent in nobis schismata" (D. 875). Since the unity symbolized by the *sacramentum ecclesiasticae unitatis* begins in the kingdom of Christ on earth and is perfected in His kingdom in heaven, it is not surprising to find that some Fathers saw the earthly kingdom and others the heavenly, in our Lord's bequest, "Dispono vobis regnum".

The Eucharistic symbolism is not displayed fully except when the sacrament is both consecrated and administered, that is, at Mass, and especially at a Mass when all present communicate, as at the Last Supper; for then is most apparent the *convivial* aspect of the Eucharist which this symbolism supposes. Incidentally we see here a good reason why Mass without anyone present besides the priest needs an extraordinary cause to justify it; and also why Communion outside Mass is not the ideal.

The sacrificial character of the Mass was stressed by the Council



of Trent and has been rightly prominent in post-Tridentine theology because Protestants had denied it; and the Council also affirmed the propriety of Masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally; but this does not mean that the Mass is not a *sacrum convivium*. The Mass is at once a sacrifice and sacred banquet, the banquet being a sacrificial one. The Christian altar was styled by St. Paul a table, *mensa Domini*, while he clearly implied that it was a sacrificial table, by contrasting it with the *mensa daemoniorum* (I Cor., x, 21).

Nevertheless, Holy Communion administered outside Mass, because of its essential relation to a Mass, and because of the oneness of Christ in every consecrated particle, makes us *commensales*, or table-companions, of the faithful throughout the Church in this, and in every age, and indeed companions of Christ Himself. In every Mass He presides invisibly, being represented outwardly by His sacramental vicegerent, the officiating priest, who is never more nor less than *alter Christus*.

"Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,

"Qui nos pascis hic mortales:

"Tuos ibi commensales,

"Cohaeredes et sodales

"Fac sanctorum civium. Amen".

CORNELIUS ROBERTS.

# The Sixth Chapter of St. John

## A EUCHARISTIC SURVEY

On another page of this Congress number of the *A.C.R.* appears a notice (not a review) of the new one-volume "Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture." The writer of the present Eucharistic survey contributed the commentary on the fourth Gospel to that volume, and he naturally did his best to do justice to the great sixth chapter. There will, therefore (one might easily suppose), be many echoes of his treatment of the Eucharistic discourse in the present pages. They are not, however, a repetition of the comments written some three or four years ago, but a fresh handling of Christ's promise of the Eucharist.

In fact, this is not a commentary on the sixth chapter of St. John in the ordinary sense. It is rather an attempt to help priests and religious and lay persons to make a "living" meditation on what Christ did and said during two or three memorable days of His public life—the days of the Eucharistic crisis.

The seventy-one verses of St. John's sixth chapter naturally divide into three preludes—into a discourse, which interruptions, change of audience and the due development of a *single* theme divide into three parts—and into a final twofold discernment of spirits—eight sections in all. We shall do our best to gather together all the significant circumstances of this promise of the Eucharist, feel the atmosphere of it, follow the movement of the ideas, and relish the realism of the language of Christ's wonderful promise.

Our opening prelude is furnished by the thirteen verses which give St. John's account of the first multiplication of bread. The time and the place are noted by the evangelist, and in the marking of details St. John here stands side by side with the pictorial St. Mark.

Our Lord "did everything well." There was significance in His choice of times and places. We cannot indeed always discover the full secret meaning of His mode of acting, as, for instance when he cured the blind man outside Bethsaida not instantaneously but gradually; but here, in the preparation of the promise of the Eucharist, we can easily see the plan of action which surrounds the theme of the Bread of life.

The geography of the sixth chapter is a living register of movements and places, which comes undoubtedly from an eye-witness who saw everything himself and tells what he saw and heard many years

later. Had St. John written some twenty or thirty years after the events, like the other evangelists, he probably would not have given a second name for the Sea of Galilee. He calls it also the Sea of Tiberias. He is the only evangelist to do so. Apparently it took a considerable time for the name of the city built by Herod Antipas between 26 A.D. and 28, and called after Tiberius, to attach its name to the Lake of Genesareth.

To go across the Lake in ordinary Galilaean parlance meant to pass from the western side to the eastern. It means this in the opening verse of chapter six, but the eye-witness, St. John, uses the same phrase: "across the Lake" for the westward journey of the apostles, after the miracle, and also of the people finding Jesus on the western side next day.

Besides the journeys over the water, our imagination will also take in the crowds hastening—running, as it were—by the land route over the Jordan to the plain south of Bethsaida Julias, which was then much nearer the shore of the Lake than the site which is now marked by the name of Et Tell. We should know that beautiful lake and its shores almost as well as we know the place where we grew up, for round those shores were the first headquarters of the Christian apostolate. In shape it is almost a heart, through which the Jordan flows from top to point. The place of the bread-miracle, the plain of El-Bateha, is on the eastern side. So the crowds circled the left lobe of the heart and reached the landing place of the boat before our Lord and the Apostles. The landing place seems to have been a spot where the hills drew close to the shore, some four or five miles south of Bethsaida Julias.

The place was uninhabited. In fact, our Lord was taking the Apostles there for a rest and a retreat. But He knew what was going to happen. It was just the place to accommodate a great crowd numbering 5000 men, without counting women and children—these being less numerous, it would seem. It also offered a convenient elevation for our Lord and His apostles to sit, while He taught the people and cured their sick. This session of Christ and His assessors overlooking the plain of El Bateha has an undefinable majesty in the simple sentence of St. John which records it.

The time is marked according to the festal calendar and the seasonal decor of nature. The Pasch was near. The grass was high and thick. St. Mark tells us that it was yellow-green. This luxuriant growth of grass indicates a day between the middle of March and the



middle of April. The nearness of the Pasch also partly explains the greatness of the crowds. Caravans were forming for the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It is easy for us to see why Christ chose the approach of the Pasch for the promise that was to be realized at another Pasch. When another Passover came round, the old Pasch would give place to the new.

Can we determine the time more exactly? I believe we can. The multiplication of bread took place on a Thursday. The fact that the promise of the Eucharist was made in the synagogue at Capharnaum suggests Saturday (from sunset to sunset) as the day of the promise. Codex D, St. Augustine and several MSS of the Vulgate have the time-note "sabbato" together with the place-note "in Capharnaum". (59). This would mean that the people crossed over from El Bateha to Capharnaum on Friday, which day St. John himself calls the morrow of the miracle.

If 30 A.D. is the probable year of the Passion, the promise was made in the year 29. In 29 the Pasch, that is, the fifteenth of Nisan fell on a Monday, which was the 19th of April in the Julian Calendar. To set the bread-miracle on the preceding Thursday the 15th of April would not allow sufficient time for those Galilaeans to make the journey to Jerusalem for the Pasch, but Thursday, April the 8th, is not unlikely. If that is really the day, it was almost one year from the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, which (in the chronology here followed) took place on the same liturgical day as the crucifixion, that is, the 14th of Nisan, 30 A.D. That was April 7 in the Julian Calendar. If we reckon by Roman days, as St. John does, the promise of the Eucharist would be just one year, minus two days before the Last Supper.

If, instead, we place our Lord's death on April 3, 33, the Thursday before the Pasch in the preceding year 32 would have been April 10, and the Thursday before that just April 3. In any case we have indications that our Lord timed the Promise of the Eucharist. The chronological probabilities rest on one or other of those years, namely, 30 or 33, as the date of the crucifixion, that is to say, on 29 or 32 A.D., as the date of the Eucharistic Promise.

Many things go to show the importance which our Lord attached to the bread-miracle. St. John shows Him surveying the crowd with his eyes. He evidently wished to impress the miracle on the Apostles. This was the purpose of the test-question addressed to Philip, the assessment of the minimum of bread required, the inventory of available sup-

plies made by Andrew—five barley loaves and two fishes. This and the second bread-miracle are the only Galilean miracles to which our Lord referred at a later date: "Do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves among five thousand how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" They said to him: 'Twelve'. "And when I broke the seven loaves among four thousand, how many large baskets of fragments did you take up?" They said: 'Seven'. And he said to them: "How is it that you do not understand?"

The importance of the Apostles is also brought into relief. They were the marshallers of the crowd, the picturesque arrangement of whom, in companies of fifty and a hundred, stretched like flower-beds on the yellow-green grass, is most vividly depicted by St. Mark. The Synoptists show that the Apostles were the distributors of the bread multiplied by the blessing of our Lord and the touch of His hands—"the power" says St. Augustine, "was in the hands of Christ". The twelve baskets of fragments would have been for the Twelve a monument, as it were, of the miracle.

St. John saw clearly the significance of this "table prepared in the wilderness". It is the only miracle already described by Matthew, Mark and Luke, which he receives into his Gospel. Since we have reason to believe that the Sacrament of Christ's Flesh and Blood was already called Eucharist when the Fourth Gospel was written (Cfr. St. Ignatius of Antioch), we can see a Eucharistic hint in the *eucharistesas* which the Apostle uses for the preliminary blessing pronounced by Jesus. The other evangelists use: *eulogesen*. St. John's preference for *eucharistesas* is all the more remarkable, since he repeats it almost unnecessarily (one would say) later in this chapter (v. 23).

We have perhaps said enough (but not everything) about this first prelude. The second prelude is a miracle which St. John records, although it was already recorded in Matthew and Mark—Christ walking on the water. Five of the seven pre-resurrection miracles described by St. John stand in close relation to words which Jesus spoke. The miracle on the cripple at Bezatha led to a discourse on the unity of operation between Christ and His Father; the curing of a blind man accompanied the discourse on "the Light of the world"; the resuscitation of Lazarus emphasised the word: "I am the resurrection and the life". The bread-miracle and the walking on the water prepare the Apostles to receive the discourse on the Bread of life. If Christ could multiply a little bread to feed five thousand, why not believe that He can

give His flesh as food to the whole world? If He could make a liquid lake a solid road for His feet, why not admit His power to find a way of giving His body for the spiritual nourishment of men?

The third prelude is the immediate setting of the scene of the Eucharistic discourse.

When our Lord joined the Apostles at the beginning of the fourth watch, the boat quickly came to land, not at Capharnaum but, as St. Matthew and St. Mark tell us, at Gennesareth, perhaps as far south as Magdala. A multitude of sick people were brought to him from all sides, so that a considerable part of that Friday would have been taken up with the care of many unfortunates at many points of the road to Capharnaum. As the journey was about six miles, we may conjecture that Jesus did not reach Capharnaum much before evening, when the sabbath was about to begin.

In the meantime the crowds, who had bivouacked in El Bateha, crossed the Lake in boats that came over from Tiberias to the eastern coast. To their surprise they met Jesus at Capharnaum in the evening, although they could not figure out when He had come across. Hence the question: "Rabbi, when didst thou come here?" As Maldonatus observes, they were as curious to know how He had come, as they were to know when He had come.

Those crowds had been full of enthusiasm the day before. They had wanted to take Jesus and make Him King, for they felt that He was the Prophet promised by Moses. By Prophet they doubtless understood Messiah, although the learned men of Juda distinguished the Prophet from the Messiah (Jn. 1: 20-25). Jesus had fled from them, and had compelled the Apostles to embark for the crossing of the Lake, lest they also might be infected with the enthusiasm. Unfortunately the enthusiasm, religious though it appeared to be, was worldly enthusiasm. It was a bread-and-prosperity hunger. With pointed reference to the multiplication of the loaves some twenty-six hours ago, Jesus was quick to tell them this. As He had made the water of a well the starting-point of His instruction to the Samaritan woman, so here He makes the bread of El Bateha the starting-point of His Eucharistic discourse.

Is it really a Eucharistic discourse? And is there unity of theme in those thirty-four verses, which are a resumé of words spoken in the synagogue of Capharnaum—probably in that very synagogue built by the centurion who gave us the "Domine, non sum dignus"? In



answering these questions I may be allowed to quote from the "Catholic Commentary".

"The Eucharistic character of this discourse is supported by cogent arguments and can claim patristic favour dating most probably from Ignatius of Antioch. Justin and especially Irenaeus may also be cited. The Antiochene Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nyssa, the two Cyrils of Jerusalem and Alexandria, not only stand for the Eucharistic interpretation, but are pronounced 'realists'. Not merely on account of the allegorism of Origen, but for other reasons also the metaphorical interpretation (eating Christ by faith), which amounts to 'spiritual communion', has had its vogue in the Church. Though St. Augustine can be shown to have understood the discourse eucharistically, later theologians failed to understand his sacramental realism owing to Augustine's strong emphasis on two points, namely, a) that we must eschew anything like Capharnaite carnalism, and b) that we must look for the fruits described in Jn. 6: 26-58 in the ecclesiastical unity of the mystic body of Christ; cf. de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 296. Augustine's second emphasis was undoubtedly due to his anti-Donatist preoccupations. His treatment of the matter greatly influenced the Latin Middle Age; and, moreover, in the 14th and 15th centuries polemics against Greeks giving the Eucharist to infants and against Bohemian utraquists strengthened the 'spiritual' interpretation. In 1551 (Oct. 11) the Council of Trent used 6: 58 as a Eucharistic text, but, in view of a controversy that took place and continued during the Council, Session XXI (16th July, 1562) expressly left the rival interpretation of Jn. 6 untouched. To-day, however, Catholic unanimity on the Eucharistic interpretation of 6: 51-58 is almost absolute, and very few non-Catholic interpreters deny it. This is another case of a tradition being obscured and reasserting itself. If the discourse is not a promise of the Eucharist, the silence of John the Beloved on the Sacrament of love would be a positive enigma; the bread of the future to be given not by the Father but by the Son of Man (27), the clear impression made on the crowds and the disciples, the strongly emphatic comparison with manna, the insistence *à outrance* on Flesh and Blood as food and drink—all these things in the non-eucharistic interpretation would be unintelligible.

"Some commentators have held that 26-58 are two or three discourses united together, and Westcott finds not only distinct themes but also distinct audiences at 26 (*crowds*), 41 (*Jews*) and 51 (*Jews and*

*disciples*). A close examination will, however, show that our Lord from 27, and therefore from the beginning, intends to promise the Eucharist. Subsequently His words have the unity of a discourse which is partly a dialogue. Having introduced the subject of a spiritual bread to be given (27) He identifies it with Himself, the One come down from heaven (35) who can satisfy hunger and thirst, but in believers only. Here unbelief asserts itself in whispered murmuring, and the unbelievers are called by the name of *Jews*, which Jn. habitually uses for the hostile party. Having explained the necessity of faith, 44-47, Jesus resumes the 'manna' comparison (32 parallel to 49) and by using the verb 'to eat' for the first time shows that 48-58 have reference to a food really or physically eaten. There is a gradation of parts, not splicing of pieces".

In a brief survey like this it would seem best to give the discourse in an accurate paraphrase which will make the movement felt and mark the gradations and *émpases*.

Our Lord tells the crowds, so enthusiastic about Him yesterday, that they do not perceive the spiritual meaning of His miracles. They are bread-seekers, interested in earthly happiness, the enjoyment of an easily acquired plenty. "Labour", He said, "to acquire not the food that perishes but remains unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you. Him the Father, God Himself, has sealed". Christ, sealed by God with the seal of divinity, is to be the giver of the promised food in the future. Therefore the food is not obtainable here and now. The crowd desire it without understanding anything more about it than that it seems to be greater than the bread of El Bateha. They ask what works they must do as works enjoined by God in order to have this food. Jesus answers that one basic work is required, namely, belief in Him whom God has sent. Without belief in the Word Incarnate (who is before them here and now) they cannot enjoy that food of the future. As the Word Incarnate, Jesus is a heavenly bread here and now, but a bread given by the Father. In contrast to the manna, which came from the heavens of the air, the Word Incarnate has come down from the heaven of God's throne, to give life not to one people but to the whole world. The crowds do not yet understand clearly that He is identifying the bread with Himself. So they say, like the Samaritan woman: "Lord, always give us this bread". Then He says: "I am the bread of life". Still, although He is the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, He

does not use the metaphor of eating and drinking. Coming to Him is believing in Him. The crowds have seen Him, but do not believe. If they were to come to Him by faith, He could not refuse to receive them, for the will of His father, which is the law of His life, is to receive all given to Him. To cast them out, to allow them to perish would be the negation of His mission. Rather He will save them completely and raise them up on the last day. "This", He says, "is the will of my Father, who sent me, that whoever beholds the Son and believes in him shall have life everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day".

Here the dialogue is engaged with a party of hostile Jews. They murmur at His claim to heavenly origin. They know His father and mother. How can He say: "I have come down from heaven?" To those murmurers and sons of murmurers Jesus makes answer by explaining the nature of faith. It is an interior attraction by which the Father draws the believer to the Son. It is an interior, divinely imparted learning. It is adherence to the word of God, when it is heard. Jesus concludes this necessary excursus on faith—if we may so call it—by repeating the assertion: "Amen, amen I say to you, he who believes has life everlasting".

The discourse had begun with a *brōsis*, that is, a food that is eaten. St. John had already used the verb *brōskō* of those who had eaten the loaves at El Bateha. It is quite remarkable, however, that no mention of eating occurs during the long answer to the question: What are we to do? Faith is "coming to Christ", not eating Him. As the object of faith He is the bread from heaven which the Father *gives*. As given by the Father there is no question of eating and drinking, though the person of Jesus satisfies spiritual hunger and thirst. The eating implied in the word *brōsis*, food, at the beginning (v. 27) is only taken up again when Christ repeats (v. 48): "I am the bread of life", then resumes the comparison of manna, and speaks of Himself as giving His own flesh and blood. Jesus Himself will give the *food*, but He gives it only to believers in His person. Really for anyone who does not believe in Him as the Word Incarnate the Eucharist is a sheer impossibility. It is to those whom the Father draws to the Son that the Son gives His flesh and blood as food and drink. This sacramental giving—the *how* of which was not known till the Last Supper—is here set forth in terms of stark realism. The same who is the Bread of life, to be believed in (v. 35) is the bread of life to be eaten (v. 50). This bread is as truly



given for eating as the manna was, but is of immeasurably superior efficacy. "Your fathers ate the manna in the desert and died"—the manna was only a food to support temporal life for a time—"this is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die"—it is a spiritual food of permanent efficacy. The bread of life, the living bread has really come down from heaven, and is Jesus. But how? In the gift of His body and blood—"the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world". The Sacrificial language shows that there is question of immolated flesh.

This was too much for the hostile Jews. They raised an argument amongst themselves, the burden of which was: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" We might express what was in the mind of those objectors—those Capharnaïtes, as they have been called by commentators—we might express what was in their mind thus: Eating flesh means eating dead flesh, and eating dead human flesh is cannibalism. But our Lord goes on more solemnly, more assertively, more shockingly—this last adverb is justified by the Jewish horror of drinking blood prohibited by a Noachic and Levitical precept (Gen. 9: 4; Lev. 26; 17: 14). What Jesus now says is this: "Amen, amen I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you have not life in you". Even this outright realism is increased in the verse which follows; for a verb *trôgein*, more strongly physical than *esthiein* (*phagein*) and somewhat close to our "munch" or "crunch" is used for eating: "He who eats (*trôgôn*) my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day". Resurrection is the fruit of the Eucharist. Ignatius of Antioch, ten years after the composition of the fourth Gospel, called the Eucharist "the medicine of immortality, an antidote that we may not die, but live for ever in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 20). Four times in this discourse Jesus says that He will raise up the believer (39, 40, 44) and the eater of His flesh (54) on the last day.

This life-giving and resurrectional efficacy of the Eucharist is our Lord's own teaching, and is therefore the teaching of the Church. In his Encyclical *Miræ caritatis* (May 28, 1902) Pope Leo XIII wrote: "The august Sacrament is at once the cause and the pledge of beatitude and glory not only for the soul but for the body also. While It enriches souls with a fulness of celestial blessings, It permeates them with sweetest joys far beyond every conception and every hope; in adversity It

sustains, in the battle of a virtuous life It strengthens, It preserves unto life everlasting, and brings men to it as a provision for the journey. In the fragile and failing body the Divine Host plants future resurrection, for indeed the immortal body of Christ inserts a seed of immortality which is to burst into living beauty one day. That twofold blessing for both soul and body, which is to result from the Eucharist, the Church has always taught in accordance with the affirmation of Christ Himself: 'He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day'."

Here we come back to the *brōsis* or food with which the discourse began: "My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live by the Father, so also he who eats me shall live by me. This is the bread which has come down from heaven. Not as your fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread shall live for ever".

I need not dilate on the fusion of divine and human life which is the grace of the Eucharist. I am principally concerned with the assertion that the flesh and blood of Christ given by Jesus (eucharistically) are real food and drink involving a real Sacramental presence of the body and blood of the Word Incarnate. We might also say that the reality of the *brōsis* is heightened by the use of that ultra-realistic verb *trogein*, which we read no less than four times in verses 54 to 58.

As Father Prat remarks in his fine *Life of Christ*, Jesus could not have chosen clearer, more precise, more emphatic—let us also say more realistic—terms to teach the Catholic dogma of the Real Presence. If there is only question of a virtual, symbolic or mystic presence, metaphor has gone beyond all usual limits. Seven times in a few verses we read: "Eat my flesh and drink my blood"; we are solemnly assured that the food and drink are true and not metaphorical; we are led to understand that the eating of manna and the eating of Christ's flesh are equally real. Nothing could be more unmetaphorical than that. In the light of what Christ said at the Last Supper when He instituted the Holy Eucharist, the Catholic exegesis of Jn. 6 simply follows the open high-road of rational interpretation.

The discourse of Jesus was pronounced in the synagogue at Capharnaum. It is not claimed that the imposing ruins of a synagogue which are now to be seen to Tell Hum are the remains of that same synagogue. They date from a few hundred years later. But they probably stand on the same ground. On a lintel of the building there is a

relief showing a pot of manna surround by vine-leaves and grapes. They are the work of Jewish hands, but surely a providential reminder of the Eucharistic Promise made on this spot.

What follows—the discernment of spirits—took place outside the synagogue soon after, not—it would seem—next day or some days after, as Father Prat suggests.

The words of Jesus proved too strong for some who were His disciples. Many of them said: "This is a hard teaching; who can so much as listen to it?" In the presence of the offence thus taken at His words Jesus, who knew all this murmuring in His own spirit, said to the doubting disciples: "Does this scandalize you? When you see the Son of Man ascending where he was before . . ." The second question is elliptical. We must supply a phrase like: "What will you think then?—will the offence you are now taking continue?" According to St. Cyril, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, Jesus insinuated that the scandal of supposed cannibalism would then have no place. This seems to be the right interpretation. The ascension of the glorified Christ will eliminate any thought of cannibalistic eating of His flesh. Others like Maldonatus, Toletus, Corluy, Lagrange suppose that Jesus adds to the scandal created by His words. In any case our Lord demands of His disciples an act of faith without reserve.

Taking the whole context, it seems that we should understand the following words: "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some among you who do not believe"—we should understand these words as an invitation to higher thinking. He says: Received spiritually these words are life-giving, understood carnally they profit nothing.

Knowing the unbelieving mind of those disciples, Jesus repeated what He had said about faith: "No one can come to me, unless it has been given to him from the Father". There follows one of those tragic sentences which abound in the fourth Gospel: "From this many of his disciples withdrew and walked no more with him". The same sort of thing happened in the sixteenth century.

Our Lord has no explanation to give about a purely spiritual eating. His words had offended unbelieving minds. He did nothing to take away the stumbling-block. Rather He turned to the Twelve and asked: "Will you also go away?" We should be eternally grateful to Simon Peter for the answer he made that day in his own name, in the name of



the apostolic college and in the name of the Church which always is where Peter is. Peter said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast words of everlasting life, and we have come to believe and to know that thou art the Holy One of God". Even amongst the apostles, however, there was one whose heart was not right and whom the Father was not drawing. Our Lord said: "Have I not chosen you, the twelve of you, and one of you is a devil". He was speaking of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, for he was going to betray him, although he was one of the twelve".

W. LEONARD.

# Bishop Willson, XV.

## A HAPPY FAMILY.

*Summary:* Dr. Willson's problem of providing both chaplains for convicts and priests for the parishes—He seeks priests abroad in 1847—His visit to Ireland—Sad state of the country—Obtains several volunteers for Hobart—Lyons Mission Society and benefactors provide money for education of priests—In 1853 he goes abroad again to seek priests—Twelve priests and students volunteer—Julian Tenison Woods' connection with Tasmania—Appeal to Cardinal Wiseman for funds—Nineteen priests in Hobart in 1865—His relations with the priests of the diocese—Anecdotes on this question.

Being himself a tireless labourer for souls, Bishop Willson well understood the paramount importance of keeping his diocese supplied with active apostles, ready to endure hardship, poverty, fatigue, and hunger in campaigning for Christ. Early Tasmania offered its own peculiar problems for solution, presenting, as it did, two distinct fields of toil. Just as the Lieutenant-Governors ruled a colony of free settlers with the help of a council of advisers, and also a Penal Department through a Comptroller-General; so, too, the Bishop presided over a kingdom within a kingdom. One flock of Religious Instructors, or Chaplains, endowed with a special aptitude for the task in hand; the second called for the ministrations of a pastoral clergy permanently affiliated to the diocese. To enlist Chaplains as well as to provide for future expansion along normal lines, Dr. Willson availed himself of the opportunity presented by his first visit to Europe. After 141 days at sea he landed in England early in 1847.

The Archbishop of Sydney had gone abroad well ahead of Dr. Willson. He, too, wanted priests. Not only did he precede the Bishop of Hobart in covering regions most likely to yield fruit: he had been twice to several seminaries and colleges before his suffragan had concluded talks with the Secretary of State in London and with the Holy See in reference to the affairs of his island diocese. Rumours about the immediate closing down of Norfolk Island, with the probable transfer of its population to Tasmania, encouraged the hope that two Chaplains would also be transferred, thus releasing some of Dr. Willson's priests for parish work proper. The Archbishop of Sydney viewed the matter in another light: he had no intention of handing over his subjects. Writing from Kilkenny, 17th August, 1847, he said: "In reference to the two clergymen at Norfolk Island, in the supposition that the island is entirely abandoned, they will return to New South

Wales. This appears the natural course. . . . The difficulty of obtaining priests increases every day". More discouraging still it must have been to read: "I found the missionary spirit, especially at Maynooth, well nigh extinct. The unfortunate state of the country may cause some to go elsewhere—yet this is not the kind of vocation I approve".

By the time Bishop Willson reached Ireland in his quest for assistance, the political as well as the social situation had seriously deteriorated. Famine, aggravated by fever, held the nation in the terrifying grip of death. Whisperings of a threatened armed revolt increased the general confusion. Speeding away from the scourges of disease and misrule, multitudes of unhappy human beings flocked to the United States of America, the land of liberty offering rich harvests with full employment. Many priests were falling victims to typhus at home; many more, at the request of the American Bishops, had followed their countrymen across the Atlantic Ocean. So it happened that Dr. Willson came appealing to the very same Colleges that had already done their utmost for Archbishop Polding, for the Church in England, and for the Bishops of the great republic of the Western Hemisphere. Nevertheless, the Hobart Bishop could lay claim to a fair measure of success. Martin Keohan, James Hogan, and Edward Marum volunteered at Kilkenny: they would leave for Tasmania on being ordained deacons two years later. Dr. Willson next approached All Hallows College, newly established expressly to train missionaries for English-speaking countries abroad. Here he selected Charles Woods and John Murphy. Unexpectedly, Rome supplied another volunteer—the Rev. Timothy Lucas, formerly a student at Maynooth. Ready to go off at once in the Bishop's company were four priests chosen to serve as Chaplains—Fathers Andrew Maguire, Hugh Magorian, John Roe, Peter Wood—as well as a deacon, Michael Burke. On January 9, 1848, the party left London in the barque *Tamar*. They reached Hobart on 19th April.

Responding to an enthusiastic welcome on his return to Tasmania, the Bishop gave an account of his experiences in Rome, England, and Ireland. He had not been very successful in procuring diocesan clergy; for this he gave an explanation: "The havoc that death has made in the priesthood in England and in Ireland by fever caught in the discharge of their sacred duties was the cause of my not obtaining more clergymen to labour with me in this distant land". Worse still, two of the priests nominated for chaplaincies—Peter Wood and John Roe—



decided not to remain in the diocese in any capacity. For some years a grievous situation would exist: difficult, in truth, was it going to be to find pastors for the growing rural areas. Having found them, another question had to be answered: How were they to be supplied with the very necessities of existence? Only heavy sacrifices made by the Bishop himself and by those parish priests—three in number—supported by the Colonial Government, could justify the attempt to set up new spiritual centres or encourage any solid hope of their stability.

One benefit followed on the activity of the Australian prelates in England, namely, a regulation permitting Chaplains to travel on ships bringing deported men to the Colony. In that capacity, three of Bishop Willson's chosen missionaries reached their destination: Fathers Lucas, Murphy, and Charles Woods. The last-named priest got a passage on the *Blenheim* with 310 men from Ireland, many of them sent into exile for complicity in the political disturbances of the period. Having left Cove, Cork, on 23rd July, they landed in Hobart on 31st October, 1851.

The Bishop kept in touch by letter with the Irish Seminaries, always hoping for further aid. From the Lyons Mission Society he had succeeded in getting some funds towards the maintenance of students at All Hallows College, Dublin. "Without this plan," he said, "my chance of obtaining *such clergy as I required* was most unsatisfactory".

Cornelius Driscoll, who died on 1st May, 1848, remembered diocesan needs: in his last will and testament he made provision for the education of future priests. The chief problem, however, remained: Where were the priests to be found? Little could be accomplished in those days by correspondence: a personal approach seemed to be necessary. The chance offered again in 1853 when medical advisers ordered Dr. Willson to take a complete rest for eighteen months or two years. The need for Chaplains no longer existed: pastoral clergy alone would be enlisted. This, we may be sure, made an easier pathway for the Bishop, rendering his appeal more attractive than on a former occasion. Having completed diocesan business in Rome, he hopefully crossed over to Ireland.

His *Diary* of 1854 helps us to trace Bishop Willson's movements:—

"Sept. 7: Left Birmingham for Ireland.

"Sept. 8: Celebrated Mass at Marlborough Street Church.

"Visited Sisters of Charity. Then went to their House at Harold's Cross. Called to their Hospital, Stephen's Green.

"Sept. 9: Celebrated Mass in Gardiner Street.

"Called twice at Archbishop's. Went to All Hallows College.

"Sept. 10: Went to Carlow College. Rev. Mr. Dunne [one of the Bishop's students] objects to a foreign mission. Returned to Dublin.

"Sept. 11: Called at All Hallows College to see Dr. Woodlock and Mr. Bedford.

"Went to Maynooth College and spent the night there.

"Sept. 12: Left Dublin for England".

This hurried visit to Ireland proved of great value to the Tasmanian Church; being the first step in the movement which in due time would give to the diocese Matthew O'Callagan, Edward Walsh, Peter O'Meara, James Noone, John McKernan, and John Augustine Butler from All Hallows; James Holehan and Philip Hennebry from Carlow. Rome, too, offered to accept some candidates for the Tasmanian priesthood. Of these, one was ordained in 1862; three others had not completed their theological course in Propaganda College at the date of the Bishop's death.

In England on this occasion Dr. Willson met two young men who expressed a wish to go with him to Tasmania. One of these is referred to in the *Diary*: "Received the Cardinal's permission to have the Rev. Mr. Pringle". The other was Julian Tenison Woods. Changing his mind at the last moment, the former refused to embark; while Julian Woods, after about three weeks at St. Mary's Seminary in Hobart, went on to Adelaide, where he later received Holy Orders. His chief title to fame is the fact that he worked with Mother Mary McKillop in founding the Sisters of St. Joseph. The account of his activity in Tasmania in 1855, as told in the Rev. G. O'Neill's pages, is nothing but romance.

In his company on returning to Hobart the Bishop had a young priest. John Fitzgerald was born in Hobart in 1830. At the age of 19 he left his native city on a ship by which the Rev. P. B. Geoghegan as well as the Rev. J. Roe had booked passages. Father Geoghegan, writing to Archbishop Polding, says: "Dr. Willson has placed an amiable, talented youth under our charge on his way to Oscott College". From Oscott, the "talented youth" graduated to the English College in Rome. On 10th June, 1854, he was amongst those raised to the priesthood in the Lateran Basilica, his Bishop being present at the ceremony. Arriving in Tasmania after an absence of six years, Father Fitzgerald became first resident pastor of Campbelltown, where he

erected in 1857 the church dedicated to St. Michael. Illness forced him to take a sea voyage in 1864. He died at Plymouth, England, on 7th April, 1865.

The subsidy allotted to Hobart by the Lyons Missionary Society ceased altogether in 1857. In a vain effort to have this useful support restored in whole or in part, Dr. Willson sought the powerful influence of his friend, Cardinal Wiseman, leader of the English hierarchy. The Cardinal replied:

"London, October 28, 1858.

"My dear Lord,—

"It is always a pleasure to hear from you, whatever may be the cause. I will write to Paris, as you desire; though, to tell the truth, I hope for little. The good people of the Propagation are swayed by I know not what motives. While they give my neighbour—who has no poor except at St. George's, and who has every parish endowed—thousands, they will hardly give me hundreds. I have called on them in person and written, but I believe someone was piqued when he came to London, and that was enough! However, I will do what I can.

"... At Nottingham all seems happy.... Let us pray for one another though so far separated by space, united still in spirit and fraternal attachment.

"I am ever, my dear Lord,

"Your affectionate brother in Xt.

"N. CARD. WISEMAN."<sup>1</sup>

When Bishop Willson said adieu to Tasmania in 1865, nineteen priests, then working in the diocese, gave him an affectionate farewell message. Fifteen of them had come from Ireland; three from England; one claimed Hobart as his birthplace. This zealous band of labourers in the Lord's vineyard would soon be increased by four more who had accepted the Master's invitation to leave all things and follow Him.

Can it be said that Dr. Willson failed to staff his diocese or that he ever refused to accept the help available? Taking into account all the circumstances—the demands being made by missions elsewhere, the inadequacy of the supply, the problem of transport, the unusual features of the field to be cultivated—it will be seen that the 20,000 Catholics residing in the inhabited areas of the island were really in a better position than their brethren in many, if not most, parts of Australia. The Bishop had not neglected the duties of a good shepherd. Several years elapsed before his successor had the consolation of seeing an effective increase in the numbers of the clergy.

What were the relations between Bishop and priests? This question calls for an answer in view of the fact the one tradition has presented Dr. Willson as a man reserved, severe, and somewhat unapproachable. True it is that he exercised exceeding care in selecting

---

<sup>1</sup>Willson Papers.



candidates for the ministry: he looked for the best spiritually and intellectually. In that policy he showed wisdom. It did not arise from any lack of those qualities which bind superiors to subjects by ties of mutual respect and love. There exists abundant testimony showing the Bishop as the kindly and genial head of a devoted family. The Rev. Thomas Kelsh, in his school days and until his seventeenth year, came into intimate association with Dr. Willson. He informs us in the *Memoir of Bishop Willson*<sup>2</sup> that the gentle and benign prelate "entertained the highest esteem for his clergy and experienced great pleasure in corresponding with them. Writing on one occasion to a friend in Europe he referred to them in these words: 'I have great comfort in my super-excellent clergy. They are indeed models of zeal, piety, self-restraint, and kindness. It is quite true they have a great character in Victoria and New South Wales'. On the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the Church of the Apostles, Launceston, he remarked to some of them in his usual fatherly tone: 'I felt proud of you to-day; you all looked so grand'. Among his many acts of kindness to these, his spiritual children, it will here suffice to refer to his anxiety about them when sent to newly-established districts. After encouraging them to brave the troubles and inconveniences inseparable from the life of the missionary in such primitive regions, he would add, 'Go, Father, and do your best to establish a mission for the glory of God and salvation of souls; if you cannot succeed, *you know where I live*'. He would write repeatedly, making the most minute inquiries about their lodging, food, and such particulars that encouraged them to work zealously for souls, and to be able to comfort the good Bishop by a narrative of their success". The Rev. John Murphy used to relate how, when preparing to return by boat to his mission in the Huon after a few days as a guest at the episcopal residence, he would find near his plate at breakfast a pound note, with some such words as these: "For steaming. R.W.W." To another of his priests, Father W. Dunne, he wrote: "Could you do with me for a day or two, if I were to be with you to-morrow afternoon: my old head requires a little change and rest". Over and over again there are evidences of a rare spirit of union, confidence, and friendliness. Inviting the Bishop to come to Launceston for a rest, Father Butler writes: "I hope you will stay with us for some time—the longer the better". He loved to be with his priests: and he loved to have them in his company. Father Keohan

---

<sup>2</sup>Hobart, 1882.

often told of the hospitality and kindness he himself experienced. When he reached Hobart, as he did at regular intervals, after 50 miles journey on horseback, Dr. Willson would insist on rest and refreshment for the traveller, and would himself stable the horse, attending to every detail.

In the Roman and English pages of the *Diary* there are numerous references to letters to and from Fathers Butler, Dunne, Lucas, Bond, and other priests. These personal and affectionate communications clearly demonstrate the Bishop's power of winning the esteem and reverence of his loved and loving fellow-labourers. With his students it was the same: he corresponded with them freely, giving news of the diocese, and always holding up as models to be imitated the "super-excellent" clergy already in the mission field of Tasmania.

The virtues so characteristic of the Bishop receive frequent mention in numerous addresses presented, as was the custom of those times, when Dr. Willson came to a district for visitation, left the diocese, or returned home after a voyage abroad. It would be unwise to give over-much attention to congratulatory phrases of the type encouraged and expected in former times. But there is in those numerous presentations received by the Bishop a note of sincerity not to be mistaken. The clergy were not honouring a mere convention. They spoke from the abundance of their hearts. One quotation will suffice: "None can know—none can have experienced, as we have (having lived with you as sons with a fond parent), your kindness, your affection, and your love. . . . The zeal you have always manifested for God's glory, the anxious exertions you have ever made for the welfare of all entrusted to your personal care, your increasing endeavours on behalf of suffering humanity, will stimulate us to redouble our efforts in the good cause; and thus, with the assistance of divine grace, be able so to guard the precious treasure entrusted by you to our care that, at your return, we may be enabled to address you in the sublime language of our Blessed Lord: 'Of those whom thou hast given us we have not lost any one'."<sup>3</sup>

In his reminiscences, Archbishop Duhig records a story told by his predecessor in the See of Brisbane. "I remember", writes Dr. Duhig, "his describing a visit to Bishop Willson, of Hobart, made on behalf of Dr. O'Quinn. Father Dunne's only instrument of introduction was a telegram sent to him in Sydney by the Bishop, who had heard

---

<sup>3</sup>Addresses in Hobart Archives.

that Dr. Willson was about to visit Rome, and desired him to transact some business for him there. The Bishop of Hobart, who was known for his imperious manner, declined to assume the responsibility of any business, especially on the meagre particulars brought by the young priest. 'Well, your Lordship', said Fr. Dunne, 'I am naturally disappointed that my mission has failed, but I quite understand your position. However, if you will permit me to say so, I feel compensated to a great extent by having had the pleasure of meeting your Lordship'.

"How is that?" said the Bishop.

"Well", replied Fr. Dunne, 'when I was a young student in Rome I was fairly proficient in Italian and was often put to translating reports sent from the missions in various countries. I have a distinct remembrance that the opinion of the heads of the Congregation of Propaganda was that no more interesting reports reached them than those that came from your Lordship'.

"You'll stay to lunch, Father", said the Bishop; 'and I shall see about transacting the business for Dr. O'Quinn'."

Whatever is to be said of this anecdote—something very like it has been told of other ecclesiastics, ancient and modern—it does not reveal the real Dr. Willson. In dealing with priests he was anything but imperious, while the door of hospitality was ever wide open without the administration of flattery in copious doses. The Bishop's visits to Rome were made in 1847 and 1854, before Dr. O'Quinn came to Brisbane. The incident quoted may, therefore, be associated with Dr. Willson's journey to Europe in 1865. If he had any commission at that time from the Bishop of Brisbane he never reached Rome to carry it into effect.

JOHN H. CULLEN.



# Dogmatic Theology

## THE EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY AND ITS CREDIBILITY.

The Catholic Faith came to the world as the perfect religion. It was divine: divine in its origin, because it came forth from the bosom of God Himself; divine in its content, because it contained the intimate, hidden truths concerning the infinite nature of God and God's plan for the deification of man; divine in its transmission, because it was communicated to the world by the Spirit of truth, who "searches the deep things of God," and by the Son of God, Truth Incarnate; divine in its aim, because it aimed to make sons of God from sons of men. It came into the world as a thing wholly divine.

And, as such, it came as a thing wholly mysterious. That was only to be expected of a religion bringing to mankind the revelation of the deepest, inscrutable, inexhaustible truths locked up in the impenetrable heart of the infinite God. Its mysteriousness was at once the seal of its sublimity and of its divinity. For, if it contained only such truths as man himself by his natural reason could discover, or even such truths as man could thoroughly comprehend once they had been taught to him, Christianity would not be worthy of a self-revealing God Who opened His heart to teach us all truth concerning His infinite life. Mysteries are essential to the Catholic Faith. The more unfathomable its mysteries, the more sublime and divine it is in itself. Not the *presence* of profound, inscrutable mysteries, but the *absence* of them would call for wonder—even for derision—in a religion that claimed to be divine in origin and content. That point is surprisingly overlooked, or ignored, by the enemies of our Faith.

A supernatural mystery is a truth to which we cannot attain by purely natural reason, but which is communicated to us by divine revelation, and which, even after we have received it by faith, we cannot adequately understand. Thus two elements characterize a mystery in relation to our natural reason: the very existence of the particular fact, or truth, is completely beyond its perceptive powers; and when the truth is presented to it by God, it cannot positively comprehend it. The Catholic Faith is replete with such mysteries, as the Church has ever proclaimed. Thus the Vatican Council: "If anyone maintain that no true and properly so-called mysteries are contained in divine revelation, but that all the dogmas of faith can be understood and demonstrated by

the cultured intellect from natural principles: let him be anathema". (Session III; Denzinger, 1816).

Now, the Blessed Eucharist is one of these mysteries. In fact, it is such an astounding and manifestly supernatural work of God that it is often referred to simply as "the mystery", the mystery of faith par excellence.

A simple statement of the Eucharistic dogma will bear eloquent witness to its supernatural character. The dogma proclaims these stupendous facts:

a) By the words of the Consecration Christ our Lord is really, truly, substantially present with His body, blood, soul and Divinity under each of the species (appearances, accidents) of bread and wine, as truly and physically as He was present in the womb of Mary or upon the Cross. (The real presence).

b) Our Lord is rendered really present by God's infinite power through the wonderful and unique conversion of the whole substances of bread and wine into the substance of His body and blood, which then really exist under the remaining species of bread and wine. (Transubstantiation = the way in which Christ becomes present).

c) The whole and entire Christ is present not only under each of the species, but under each and every part of each species so that if the host be broken into many parts Christ is as really and wholly present in each part as He was in the whole.

d) Christ's living and organized Body, with all its quantitative parts, is really and physically present, but in a way that is not natural to it, but supernatural. Although material in itself, it is present after the manner of a spiritual substance. It has a physical-spiritual manner of existence. Like the soul in the human body, it is substantially present whole and indivisible in the entire host and in every part thereof. It exists there supernaturally in a way that only substances of an entirely different kind (spiritual substances) can exist naturally. But that is not all. In another way its manner of existence transcends that of spiritual substances, for it is present not in one single place at one given instant but in innumerable separate places simultaneously,—wherever there is a consecrated Host. That is naturally impossible to created spiritual substances. So, while Christ's body in the Eucharist has an existence analogous to that of created spiritual substances, it yet surpasses that mode of existence. In this the Eucharistic existence of Christ's body is analogous to the existence of the Divine Substance: it resembles and

partakes of the ubiquity of God! Thus the body of Christ becomes the real spiritual food of man's spiritual soul.

A mystery indeed! Before this monument wrought by the infinite power of God human reason, left to its natural course, will unhesitatingly proclaim: "It cannot be!"

*The fact* of the real presence of Christ beneath the sacramental species is utterly impervious to natural reason because it is a supernatural fact, wrought beyond the sphere of human perception and knowable only by divine revelation. Unaided reason will lead us not to affirm but to deny the fact of the real presence, because by the natural laws of human thought a substance is manifested and known by its appearances and accidents; and all those indicate to the purely natural mind that the substance of bread, not the substance of Christ's body, is present. Faith must enter in to correct reason, halt its natural course, and bring it to accept the wonderful truth on the authority of infinite Truth who reveals it.

But even when Faith has accepted the stupendous truth of the real presence, still the nature of Christ's existence in the sacrament remains quite beyond the conceptive powers of the intellect. And that is the second characteristic of a supernatural mystery. We do not have a clear, profound knowledge of "substance" even in the natural order. And when we think of material substances, or bodies, we always conceive them with their extended quantitative parts. We have no natural example of quantity being drawn to the manner of existence of unextended substances. With what baffling obscurity are we faced, then, when we endeavour to conceive of a material body with all its organized parts endowed with such a supernatural mode of existence that it partakes of, and yet transcends, the manner of existence proper to spiritual substances!

The mystery must ever remain inaccessible to the scrutiny of our puny minds because there is at its core a greatness and a sublimity that are totally overpowering. But, because we cannot positively comprehend the mystery it does not follow that it is unintelligible. We can readily grasp the wonderful truth that our Lord is really and truly present under the sacramental species. We know what is meant by the conversion of substance into substance, even into the pre-existing substance of Christ's Body and Blood. We can even see that it is possible for the accidents of a substance to remain when the substance itself is converted into something else, for the one is not in reality identical with



the other. We know, albeit imperfectly, what a spiritual substance is, and that it must be whole and indivisible in every part of the body that it occupies. We can further appreciate that, given an infinite power intimately at work in the core of every being, it is not repugnant to reason that Christ's material body should exist in the marvellous way we have described. And we can see that, since the sacred Body of Christ is destined by God to be our spiritual food, it must exist in the Eucharist in a spiritual way. But, for all that, we can never positively comprehend *how* this wonderful divine work is intrinsically accomplished, even as we could never by natural reason alone come to the knowledge that it is actually accomplished at all. Faith is required here as perhaps nowhere else in the sphere of religious truth. We accept this dogma on the supreme testimony of Truth Incarnate who can neither deceive nor be deceived. On His authority the doctrine is supremely credible.

Did our Lord, then, clearly teach us that He is really, truly, substantially present in the Blessed Eucharist? Yes, most clearly and apodictically. This is purely a matter of evidence; and evidence there is in abundance.

Let us go to the 6th chapter of St. John's Gospel, and stand among the throng pressing round Jesus in the synagogue of Capharnaum. This crowd, having followed Jesus for three days and nights in the wilderness, had witnessed there the great miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. They had proclaimed him as the awaited Messiah: "truly the prophet that is to come into the world". The Apostles, shortly afterwards, were filled with wonder at seeing Him walk towards their tossing boat on the storm-swept sea. In short, the hearts of all had been confirmed in their belief of His irresistible power in working astounding miracles. Our Saviour, in accordance with His custom of propounding doctrines drawn from His miracles, seized this favourable opportunity to announce the great promise of the institution of the Blessed Eucharist.

First He repeatedly and emphatically stresses the absolute necessity of believing in His words and doctrines, even as they had accepted His miraculous works. He insists that Faith, wholehearted and unswerving Faith, is the only door through which one may enter to a contemplation and acceptance of God's mysteries (verses 26-47). Having thus prepared their minds and wills by prodigious miracles and solemn words, He pronounces the great truth:

"Amen, amen, I say to you, . . . Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of man will give you . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread He shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. . . . Amen, I say to you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. . . . My flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in Him. . . . He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. He that eateth this bread shall live forever".

It is beyond all doubt that our Saviour here speaks explicitly of a real eating of His real flesh and a real drinking of His real blood. There is no ambiguity in Christ's words. Beyond all question man must eat His flesh and drink His blood for the spiritual nourishment of his soul and for eternal life. Four times does He use the twin expression, "eat my flesh" and "drink my blood". He clearly affirms that the bread He will give men to eat is that very flesh that soon will hang on the Cross "for the life of the world". He compares the real eating of His flesh with the real eating of the manna given from heaven to the Jews of old: "Your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever".

Now, it is perfectly clear that our Lord's audience, to a man, understood His words literally. They were shocked, bewildered and scandalized. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" they exclaimed! They argue solely as to *the way* in which this promise can be fulfilled. The only question, then, is: Were they right in understanding Jesus' words in a strictly literal sense, or did they misinterpret his statement, taking as literal what He meant to be metaphorical? The answer must lie in our Lord's reaction when He saw that they had understood His words of a real eating of His real flesh. Did He retract or mitigate His words? Did He correct the interpretation of His audience? No! with increasing emphasis and unwonted vehemence He repeats again and again that the food He will give is His true flesh to be eaten and His true blood to be drunk. In the strongest terms He confirms them in their interpretation, and threatens the terrible punishment of eternal damnation on all who refuse to accept this wonderful truth: "Amen, amen I say unto you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you".

The incredulous Jews withdraw, their proud faces lined with scorn and derision. Jesus does not interrupt their going on the path of damnation. The bewildered disciples withdraw, their hearts heavy with disappointment and unbelief. They mumble to one another: "This saying is hard; and who can hear it?" Jesus watches their going with a heavy heart. But not a word does He speak to make their going easier; not one word of correction or explanation.

Was it possible that the Master of Truth, who was Goodness—Wisdom—Truth Incarnate, should act like that and place so many feet on the road to perdition, when with one word He could have corrected their interpretation if it had been false? That is inconceivable.

Turning to the chosen Twelve, the Master neither adds nor subtracts a syllable of His words: "Will you also go away?" Go if you will. The price to remain is unwavering faith in my words: I will give you to eat my flesh and drink the blood that courses in my veins. Peter falls on his knees and answers for all. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life". We know not, Lord, how this thing shall be done, but "we have believed and have known that thou art the Christ, the Son of God". And Peter's eucharistic faith became the faith of the Church.

A year later the great promise was fulfilled. Taking bread and wine into His hands, He who is omnipotence and truth incarnate said: "This is my Body; this is my Blood". (Mt. 26, 28; Mc. 14, 22-24; Lc. 22, 19-20). Those words, by all the laws of human speech and thought, have only one meaning: "This thing, this entity which I hold in my hands, is my own Body, my own Blood. Though it have the appearances of bread, bread it is not; it is my Body". No human endeavour has ever succeeded, or ever will succeed, in explaining away the simple force of those few words. The emphatic wording of the Evangelists in the Greek text is very impressive: "This is my very Body, my very Body which is given for you. This is my very Blood, my very Blood of the New Testament, my very Blood which is shed for many unto the remission of sins". Strange words, indeed, if after all it is *not* His Body and Blood! And yet the striking emphasis adds nothing to the simple truth: this is my Body.

Those words of Christ necessarily imply, as the Council of Trent defined, the doctrine of transubstantiation. Before He pronounced those portentous words Our Lord held *bread* in His hands. After He had spoken, there was no longer bread but His own very Body. This must

absolutely be admitted if His words were true; and it is inconceivable that they were untrue. If the substance of bread had remained, together with the Body of Christ, He could not truthfully have said: "This is my Body". For, however it may be considered, the proposition would then be as follows: "This bread is my body". Which is patently false. Consequently, if the substance of bread were to remain and coexist with the Body of Christ beneath the species Christ would have to say: "Here", or "in here", "is my Body", or something similar.

The only possible meaning of our Lord's words, therefore, is this: "the substance beneath these accidents that you see is the substance of my Body". Hence the wonderful and unique conversion, wrought by divine power: what was the substance of bread is no longer bread, but the substance of Christ's Body formed in the womb of the Virgin Mary. And that demands the conversion of the one into the other.

But the Body of our Lord is a *living* Body, animated by His soul and warmed by His Blood. By natural concomitance, therefore, His soul and Blood are really present because they are really united to His Body. Moreover, since the Divinity of the Eternal Word is inseparably united to His humanity, wherever the Body is there the Divinity is also. Thus under each of the Eucharistic species there are present, really and truly and substantially, the Body and Blood and Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ the God-man.

Now, since the *whole* Body of Christ is really present, as He Himself taught us, it must possess all its parts in organized and organic unity. Yet, it is clear that the *quantity* of that sacred Body cannot be present in the ordinary natural way under the small dimensions of the host. How, then, is the quantity present? The answer is indicated in God's revelation: we know that the Eucharistic miracle is the conversion of *substance into substance*; the substance of bread into the substance of Christ's Body (transubstantiation). *Directly and per se* the conversion terminates in the *substance* of our Saviour's Body. The quantity is present concomitantly, by reason of the substance to which it is united. Now, that which is present directly and per se, draws to its mode of existence that which is present only concomitantly and, as it were, per accidens. Hence the quantity of Christ's Body is drawn, by God's omnipotence, to the manner of existence of a substance, and owing to this singular and supernatural mode of existence, the whole Body of Christ is able, like any substance, to be present whole and indivisible in the entire host and in every part thereof.



There we touch the deepest heart of the mystery. We cannot gain an adequate idea of such a truth. But no reason can be adduced to show that it is metaphysically repugnant for an infinite power to work such a prodigy. As St. Thomas says, "if it is not impossible for a corporal substance which, of itself, is outside all genus of quantity, to be daily drawn to the manner of existence of quantity, the inverse order must not be judged to be impossible, according to which quantity is drawn to the manner of existence of a corporal substance". And we may add: if the glorified Body of Christ was exempt from the laws of quantity to such an extent that it could pass through the wooden door of the supper-room, after the manner of a spirit, who would hasten to deny the possibility of His substantial-spiritual mode of existence in the Eucharist?

The mystery remains, but it is wholly credible on the authority of Him who revealed it. The explanation of the wonder is the power of Him who wrought it: and His power is omnipotence.<sup>1</sup>

THOMAS MULDOON.

---

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Muldoon's articles on the Theology of the Mass will be continued in the next number of the *A.C.R.* (Ed., *A.C.R.*).

# Moral Theology

## THE EUCHARISTIC FAST.

The Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus*, given by His Holiness Pope Pius XII, on the Feast of the Epiphany this year, introduces not a few modifications and relaxations of the law of the Eucharistic Fast as hitherto observed. There is no doubt that the new Legislation will enable many to receive the Blessed Eucharist more frequently. The opportuneness of the change is evident when one considers the numerous Indults that have been requested and granted in recent years for various classes of people in different countries. It was not easy, even for the clergy, to keep in mind and apply accurately the particular relaxations granted by the Holy See. The present Constitution is universal in its application; it is suited to the needs of nearly all the faithful everywhere and has brought about the desired uniformity not merely of the law but its practical observance.

Various dispositions are required for the lawful reception of Holy Communion. Some of these are of divine institution; and over such the Church has no authority. The necessity of being in the state of grace follows from the very nature of the Sacrament, as well as from the positive will of Christ which, to omit other references, we may deduce from the harsh words of St. Paul against those *who eat and drink unworthily* (1 Cor. 11/29). Many theologians see a divine precept in the law which imposes the reception of the Sacrament of Penance before Communion, by those who have been guilty of grave sin, no matter how contrite they may seem; and the Council of Trent states<sup>1</sup> that ecclesiastical custom so interprets the words of the Apostle: *Let a man prove himself.* (1 Cor., 11/28). Any modification of the dispositions laid down by Christ is impossible; but there are also certain regulations imposed by the Church for safeguarding the reverence due to so great a Sacrament. These may be reviewed, and mitigated or made more exacting as the circumstances of time and place and persons demand. One cardinal principle followed by the Church is that our desire to show reverence for the Blessed Eucharist should not preclude our receiving It. The law of fast before Communion is enjoined to promote reverence towards the Body of Christ Which is received as the food of our souls. An absolute fast before Communion is expressive of our faith in the Real Presence.

---

<sup>1</sup>D. 880.

It shows that we truly distinguish the Eucharist from earthly bread ; and by taking It before all other nourishment, we manifest our belief in the supreme importance of this heavenly Bread which gives life to our souls. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that abstinence from food is a help to prayer and pious thoughts, and so makes our Communion more fervent and thus more fruitful. Nevertheless, Communion by one who is not fasting is not of the nature of things irreverent. Our Lord gave Communion to His Apostles after the Last Supper, and St. Paul rebukes the Corinthians not for receiving the Body of the Lord after their feast, but for the abuses they suffered to prevail at the feast preceding the celebration of the Eucharist. It may have been the desire to avoid all such abuses, as well as the intense faith of the early Christians, that gave rise to the custom of fasting before Communion. Without giving a history of the Eucharistic Fast, we may say that Tertullian<sup>2</sup> refers to it, and later we find that the III Council of Carthage (397) confirms the custom of celebrating Mass by a Priest who is fasting ; an exception being made for Holy Thursday.<sup>3</sup> At the time of St. Augustine, the custom was universal. His words have often been quoted, taken from his letter to Januarius : "It is clearly plain, that when the disciples first received the Body and Blood of the Lord, they did so not fasting. Is that a reason for calumniating the whole Church, because Communion is received by those who are fasting? It was pleasing to the Holy Ghost, that in honour of so great a Sacrament, the Body of the Lord should enter the mouth of a Christian before all other food ; for this custom is observed throughout the entire world".<sup>4</sup>

The universal custom existing at the time of St. Augustine, and confirmed by particular laws, was made the general discipline of the Church in the Council of Constance (A.D. 1415) : "This present Council declares, decrees and defines, that, although Christ instituted this venerable Sacrament after the Supper and administered It to his disciples, nevertheless, the laudable authority of the sacred canons and the approved custom of the Church has held and does hold that this Sacrament should not be celebrated after supper, nor should Communion be received by those who are not fasting, except in case of sickness or other necessity granted or admitted by law or the Church".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Ad Uxorem. lib. II., cap. 5 ; P.L. 1296. (A.D. 200/6).

<sup>3</sup>Mansi III, 885.

<sup>4</sup>Epist. 54, ad Ianuarium, n. 7, ss. P.L. XXXIII, 203, s. (c.A.D. 400).

<sup>5</sup>D. 626.

The law of Constance is substantially that of the Code (can. 858). One who desires to be admitted to Communion must be fasting from midnight, unless in danger of death or when necessity demands that the Sacrament be safeguarded from irreverence. The same canon contains an extension of a privilege granted by Bl. Pius X in a decree of the S. Congregation of the Council:<sup>6</sup> The sick who have been confined to to bed for a month and have no certain hope of a quick recovery, may, on the advice of the confessor, receive the Holy Eucharist once or twice a week, although they have taken medicine or something by way of drink.

Such was the general law of the Church: an absolute fast from midnight in normal cases; no fast in danger of death or circumstances which demanded safeguarding the Blessed Sacrament from profanation, and some mitigation for the sick after an illness that had already kept them in bed for a month. As we have already remarked, many concessions were granted by the Holy See. By the Letter of the Holy Office, *Optime novit* (22 March, 1923), the Ordinaries were invited to have recourse to the Holy See on behalf of Priests who had to celebrate two Masses on the same day, or even one Mass at a late hour; and in cases of urgency, they were empowered to give a dispensation themselves, allowing the Priests to have something by way of drink. All the Australian Ordinaries had the faculty to grant generous dispensations to the aged, the sick, those in attendance on the sick during the night, and mothers. In other countries more extensive concessions were available, and we can recall the privileges granted to chaplains and service personnel during the recent war. Such frequent relaxations of the law of the Eucharistic Fast were evidence that in the changed conditions of life, the faithful were finding it more and more difficult to have recourse to the Table of the Lord and still keep the rigour of the absolute fast from midnight.

The Constitution *Christus Dominus* is henceforth to be the norm of the Eucharistic Fast, which, we stress, is by no means abolished. Some fast is prescribed before communion, though it is modified to a greater or lesser extent in differing circumstances. The modifications may be stated briefly as follows:

1. Natural water no longer is considered as breaking the fast. With this important exception, the law remains in all its vigour in ordinary conditions and for persons in normal health.

2. Concessions are available for those who would find fasting diffi-

---

<sup>6</sup>*Post editum*, 7 Dec., 1906.



cult. The difficulties recognised are twofold, intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic difficulty is sickness. The extrinsic difficulties are three: fatiguing work, the late hour of Communion and travel. Even for these persons, a fast from solid food and alcoholic drink is of obligation from midnight. The sick who cannot fast may be allowed liquid refreshment without restriction as to time or frequency. The others must observe a fast from all liquids, except water, for an hour before Mass (in the case of Priests) and before Communion (in the case of all others). All who are not Priests require the consent of a confessor before they can avail of any of these concessions.

3. The Bishops are authorised to permit the celebration of Mass in the evening, after four o'clock, on certain days. The Priest who celebrates this Mass and the faithful who receive holy Communion are to observe a fast of three hours from solid food, and one hour from liquid nourishment before Mass or Communion. They must abstain from alcoholic spirits from midnight and may take alcoholic beverages, v.g., wine or beer, only during solid meals.

This summary statement of the new legislation will be more readily understood as we explain the sections of the Constitution and the accompanying Instruction of the Holy Office.

#### THE CONSTITUTION *CHRISTUS DOMINUS*.

The Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus* contains in its dispositive part six articles. An Instruction issued by the Holy Office on the same day as the Constitution (6 January, 1953) determines some details of general statements of the Constitution. We shall take the articles of the Constitution and endeavour to give an explanation of them in the light of what is expounded in the Instruction.

1. The Law of the Eucharistic fast from midnight continues in force for all who are not in the peculiar circumstances afterwards to be mentioned in these Apostolic Letters. For the future, however, let this be a general principle, applicable to all, whether priests or the faithful: Natural water does not break the Eucharistic fast.

There is no difficulty here except to be sure what is meant by natural water. It is water to which nothing whatsoever has been added. We have heard the question raised whether mineral waters would break the fast. If they are taken in the same condition as they come from the natural spa, they would not do so; but if extraneous matters, flavouring, sugar, fruit extract, etc., have been added they could not be drunk before Communion. We believe the same is true if they have been merely

aerated. The Instruction of the Holy Office is definite that nothing must be added to the water.<sup>7</sup> Water may be taken freely, at any time and in any quantity, and it never breaks the Eucharistic fast.

II. The sick, though not confined to bed, on the prudent advice of the confessor, may take something by way of drink or true medicine, with the exception of what is alcoholic. The same faculty is granted to sick priests for the celebration of Mass.

This paragraph makes provision for the sick, both priests and faithful.

Sickness is ill health or physical indisposition, and it may be passing or habitual, admitting of many degrees from a slight feeling of disorder to approaching dissolution. The question to be considered here is: does the sickness make the observance of the Eucharistic fast difficult?<sup>8</sup> If not, no relaxation is to be had. The concession given to the sick after a month's illness, by can. 858, par. 2, to receive Holy Communion not fasting once or twice a week, did not require that they should be unable to fast. As it is the law of the Code, we presume it is still in force, but must not be confused with this present permission, which is granted only to those whose illness makes fasting difficult. Not every sickness has this effect. For example, a man with a broken leg is sick; but after the first few days, he would have no difficulty in fasting, and so would be required to fast if he wished to receive Communion, at least for the space of a month from his taking to bed. When the month has passed, and it does not appear that he will soon be well, he may receive Communion once or twice a week, after liquid refreshment.

It is not required that persons wishing to avail of the new concession be in bed, or that their sickness be of long duration. It is sufficient that on the morning they desire to communicate, their state of health is such that they seriously doubt whether they would not have to postpone the reception of Communion, because they find fasting too difficult.

The concession may be availed of by priests, not merely to receive Communion, but to celebrate Mass.

Priests who are sick (even on one particular morning), in the sense we have explained, may receive Communion or offer the Holy Sacrifice without further ado. They are presumed to know the law and to have

---

<sup>7</sup>L'acqua naturale (e quindi priva dell' aggiunta de qualsiasi elemento) non rompe il digiuno eucaristico. (Istruzione della S. Congreg. del S. Officio).

<sup>8</sup>I fedeli infermi, sebbene *non decumbentes*, possono prendere qualche cosa a modo di bevanda esclusi gli alcoolici, se, a causa della loro infermità, non possono, senza vero incomodo, stare digiuni fino alla Santa Comunione.

sufficient prudence to apply it to their own case. All others, however, even clerics who are not priests and lay religious, require the consent or advice of a confessor before they may enjoy the privilege. A confessor is a priest who is competent to hear the person's confession. The advice need not be sought in the confessional; it may be given in the *forum internum non-sacramentale*, and may be granted once and for all while the present circumstance remains true, i.e., sickness which makes the keeping of the fast difficult.

What is allowed? Something by way of drink or true medicine, i.e., any liquid food or any medicine (with the exclusion of whatever is alcoholic). We take by way of drink the beverages in common use: tea, coffee, cocoa, milk, fruit drinks and the like; also beaten-up eggs, etc., and breakfast meals, commonly designated as porridge, if they are of such poor consistency that they will pour and may be swallowed as liquid. Some solids, v.g., biscuits, may be broken into the beverage and dissolved, provided the resultant mixture is still liquid.

Medicines are preparations, liquid or solid, ordered by the physician for the curing of sickness or alleviating physical distress; or considered as remedies in common estimation. They are more often liquids, but are sometimes solids, such as pills, tablets, etc. The Instruction of the Holy Office insists that solids which are taken for nourishment are not medicine but food, which is not allowed.

What is not permitted? Solid food and all alcoholic drinks, non-spirituos and spirituos. A small quantity of alcohol, which is found in some medicinal preparations, does not, we think, exclude the use of these medicines. A glass of brandy given to relieve a fainting attack is given as medicine; but as it is alcoholic, the sick man could not after recovery receive Communion that day.

There is no limit as to the number of times liquids or medicine may be taken, nor is any absolute fast from them prescribed before Mass or Communion.

CASUS. Titius, a member of the Holy Name Society, is suffering from a cold which causes him to cough violently on the morning of his monthly Communion. He tries to ease the cough by a drink of water, but without success. Finally, he takes a dose of mixture procured from the chemist. May he accompany his fellow members of the Holy Name Society to Communion? He may receive Communion, provided he first takes the advice of a confessor—one of the priests of the parish or the celebrant of the Mass could usually give him the re-

quired consent. As his cold is not likely to last long, he would receive the consent for this occasion only. Another parishioner, Caius, suffers from stomach disorders and will be ill for a long time. The confessor may make the concession available to him for each time he wishes to receive Communion until he is recovered; and thus obviate the necessity of asking on every occasion. A priest who found himself in circumstances similar to those of Titius or Caius would need the consent of no one, but could celebrate Mass after taking the medicine.

Paragraphs III, IV and V deal with those who are not sick, but experience certain difficulties in observing the Eucharistic fast. The first two of these sections concern priests, the third applies to the faithful.

III. Priests who are to celebrate Mass at late hours, or after arduous labours of the ministry, or at the end of a long journey, may take something liquid, with the exclusion of alcoholic drinks. They must, however, abstain even from what is allowed, for the space of at least one hour before they celebrate Mass.

IV. Priests who celebrate twice or three times may take the ablutions, which in this case are taken in water and not wine.

In the three circumstances mentioned, and in these only, a Priest may take liquid nourishment as often as he wishes up to one hour before commencing Mass. We have already explained the meaning of liquid food; let us examine the circumstances in which the concession is available.

a) Celebration of Mass at a late hour. The hour set down in the Instruction is any time after nine o'clock. Without scruple, then, any priest who celebrates Mass after that hour, may take liquids up to one hour before he commences Mass.

b) Labours of the ministry. It is to be noted that the celebration of Mass follows the sacerdotal labours referred to (*post gravem sacri ministerii laborem*). It is also to be observed that this is sufficient reason for availing of the relaxation before a Mass celebrated prior to nine o'clock. What the onerous works of the ministry are, is not stated precisely, but we may assume they comprise the ordinary duties of a priest: hearing Confession, preaching, attending sick calls, saying an earlier Mass, etc. The Instruction of the Holy Office states that these should have occupied the priest from early morning, or at least for a long time. What is a long time? It is left to the judgment of the priest to determine. Perhaps an hour or more would be sufficient. We



think that the celebration of a Sunday Mass, including a sermon and the distribution of Communion to a large number of persons would be sufficient to justify the Priest to avail of the concession before the second Mass. A priest who had to hear confessions for an hour or so before Mass would also be excused. There must be a fast of at least one hour before Mass from all except water; but it is obviously not necessary that the arduous labours of the ministry precede the taking of the liquid nourishment.

CASUS. Father Smith celebrates the six o'clock and the seven o'clock Masses on Sunday morning. He rises at five and, after his usual devotions, is at the disposal of the parishioners for ten minutes or so before the first Mass. Between the Masses, he waits in the sacristy and reads portion of his office. Does he come under the head of those who may take liquid refreshment before either the first or second Mass?

Father Smith must fast from everything except water. He is not celebrating his first Mass after laborious work of the ministry which extended over a long time; and he would not be fasting for an hour before the second Mass, seeing that it commences at seven o'clock. If, however, his second Mass were at eight, he could, we believe, take something by way of drink between Masses, provided he did so before seven o'clock.

c) A long journey. This is defined by the Holy Office as a walk of 2 kilometres (about a mile and a quarter) or a proportionately longer journey by other means of travel, taking into consideration the difficulties of the road and the condition of the person. The question most priests will ask is: how far must I drive a car to make a journey equivalent to a walk of a mile and a quarter? We would not presume to give a definite answer, but one consideration which may help to a conclusion is the time for the distance to be traversed. A walk of a mile and a quarter would take approximately half an hour. We doubt if driving a car on a good road for half an hour is as exhausting as to walk for the same period. Of course there are roads that are not so good, and there is the element of the weather to be considered as well as the physical fitness of the priest. However, we do not think that the question of a journey will be the only one to be weighed in a practical case. The Mass will often be after nine o'clock, and will be preceded by rather arduous work. Whether the journey undertaken before Mass is sufficient of itself to allow a priest to take some liquid refreshment must be left to his own prudence to determine. If he thinks it is not as arduous

as a walk of a mile and a quarter, he is certainly not excused from this reason alone.

IV. Priests who celebrate Mass twice or three times on the same day may take the ablutions at each Mass. They do not use wine, but water only. This is an application of the principle that water does not break the fast. There will be no longer any need to be anxious to dispose of the purifications after the first Mass, when the second is to be said in another church: we have seen the last of those bottles that were carried from one place to another with the purifications. Solved for ever is the doubt about saying the second Mass, if the ablutions were inadvertently taken at the first. Even though the priest should take the ablutions in wine through mistake, he may say the second Mass without anxiety, for it is thus laid down in the Instruction of the Holy Office. When, however, a second or third Mass follows immediately, as may happen, v.g., on All Souls's day or Christmas, the rubrics of the Missal are to be followed and the ablutions are taken only at the last Mass.

V. Likewise, the faithful, even though not sick, who on account of grave inconvenience—that is, debilitating work, the lateness of the hour when they can receive Communion, or a long journey—cannot remain altogether fasting to approach the holy Table, may, with the prudent advice of a confessor, as long as the necessity lasts, take something by way of drink, with the exclusion of anything alcoholic. They must, however, abstain from all drinks (except water) for the space of at least one hour before they partake of the Bread of Angels.

The reasons required for the concession are much like those mentioned for priests, and the relaxation is the same—liquid refreshment (excluding alcohol) up to one hour before receiving Communion. Only the inconvenience arising from one of the three causes given entitles a person to a mitigation of the law of the Eucharistic fast. We must *not* arrive at the conclusion: *Quodlibet grave incommodum excusat a jejuniis eucharistico*. The faithful require the advice of a confessor before they avail of the concession. It is of interest to note that the hour is computed from the time of Communion, while for the priest it is from the commencement of Mass. Probably it was desired to include the case when the faithful receive Communion apart from Mass.

a) Debilitating work before Communion. Several examples are given in the Instruction of the Holy Office: Factory workers, those engaged in transport or waterside work who change shifts from day to night; those who because of duty or from charity spend the night with-

out sleep, as nurses and others who attend the sick, hospital personnel, police on night duty; women with child, or housewives, who have to attend to household duties for a considerable time before they can get to the church for Communion. Undoubtedly, dairy farmers who work in the early hours of the morning would also be included. In brief, this class comprises those who have to work during the night and those who must spend considerable time working during the hours of the morning before they can go to the church for Mass and Communion.

CASUS: A night nurse comes off duty at 7 a.m. She retires to rest for a few hours and attends eleven o'clock Mass. May she receive holy Communion not fasting at that Mass? She may be allowed by a priest who enjoys faculties for confessions to do so, provided she has taken no solid food (or alcoholic drink) from midnight, and is fasting from liquids (excluding water) for an hour before she receives Communion, i.e., from a short time after 10 a.m. She may have had a cup of tea or something similar several times during the night, but she is not allowed solid food after midnight. We may remark in passing that the new legislation is here less generous than the dispensation which was until recently available for sexagenarians, night nurses, mothers, and the sick in hospital. By virtue of an Indult from the Holy See, the Australian Ordinaries could allow these people to have solid foods till four hours before Communion. This concession seems to have been withdrawn, and solid food is no longer allowed after midnight.

A newsagent delivers papers from 5 a.m. till 8 a.m., and attends the nine o'clock Mass. Can he benefit by the new dispositions? He can be allowed to take liquid nourishment to an hour before he receives Communion.

Are pregnant women or nursing mothers exempt because of their condition? It seems that pregnancy or nursing, of themselves, are not sufficient. Women in either of these circumstances are mentioned in the Instruction, in so far as they are engaged in household duties before they can go to Mass. If expectant mothers are unwell, they come under the heading of the sick and may enjoy the more generous concessions given to the sick in a previous paragraph. The same would be true of mothers whose health is impaired after childbirth, or who find the nourishing of a child a serious drain on their physical strength.

2. The late hour of Communion. While nine o'clock is set down as a late hour for the priest to celebrate Mass, no particular hour is mentioned in the Instruction of the Holy Office for the Communion of

the faithful. We may take it that nine o'clock is late absolutely, but there may be circumstances when an earlier hour would be considered late. The question is to be decided according to the prudent judgment of the confessor. As a general rule, people are not astir in the early hours of the morning unless they have to be in order to work or travel a distance to the church. Mention is made in the Instruction of children who would find it difficult to return home after Communion for breakfast and then go to school. We think this has reference to cases where they would go to Communion on the way to school, and consequently at a relatively late hour. It is customary in many places in Australia for the children to go to Communion on the first Friday. With some of them it may be difficult to return home for breakfast; but seven o'clock, which is approximately the hour of Mass, can hardly be called late. Furthermore, they would have to take what is allowed before about six o'clock, and would scarcely appreciate such early rising, unless they had a considerable distance to travel to the church; in which case they would be included in the class of those who have to make a journey. On the other hand, if the Mass were at, say, 8.30, they could have a hot drink at home, go to Communion, eat some food brought with them, and be ready for school at the usual hour.

c) A journey to the church. The same length of journey is required as has already been explained above when writing of the priest.

VI. If circumstances so demand, We grant to local Ordinaries the faculty to permit the celebration of Mass during the evening hours. The Mass must never commence before four o'clock in the afternoon. It may be allowed on the feasts of precept which are still observed and on those which were once observed, on the first Fridays of the month, on days of solemnity celebrated with a great concourse of people, and, in addition, on one day of each week. The priest is to observe a fast of three hours from solid food and alcoholic drinks and one hour from non-alcoholic drink. The faithful may receive Communion at this Mass, keeping the same fast as is prescribed for the Priest, with due regard for the law of can. 857 (which forbids Communion more than once on the same day).

This paragraph introduces something altogether new in the law of the Universal Church. Evening Masses were permitted during the late war, and in some countries, v.g., France, they were also allowed, but with certain restrictions.



The faculty to permit the evening Mass is given to the local Ordinary. The Mass must never commence before 4 p.m.

It may be allowed—

- (a) on feasts of precepts, i.e., all Sundays and, for us, the five holidays of obligation;
- (b) on suppressed feasts (a last of these will be found on p. 5 of the Ordo);
- (c) on the first Friday of the month;
- (d) on the occasion on some celebration, either ecclesiastical or civil, when a large number of people are congregated;
- (e) and on one other day of the week.

In places where missionary conditions prevail, where only seldom can the priest visit distant stations, the Ordinary may permit the evening Mass also on the other days of the week.

A priest who says Mass in the morning may not celebrate again in the evening, unless he enjoys the faculty of binating. On a Sunday, or holiday of obligation, the priest who is to celebrate the evening Mass could say one Mass in the morning: on the other days when evening Mass is permitted, he could not say Mass at all in the morning.

The faithful may receive Communion at the evening Mass or immediately before or after it—provided they have not already been at Communion that day. (A day is measured from midnight till midnight.)

The fast prescribed is the same for the celebrant of the Mass and communicants, that is of three hours from solid food and alcoholic drinks and one hour from other liquids (except water). The Instruction of the Holy Office determines the prohibition of alcoholic drink more specifically. Spirituous liquors are forbidden from midnight, other intoxicants are prohibited except at meals; but at meals (which must be completed at least three hours before Mass or Communion) wine, beer, etc., may be taken with due moderation.

The Constitution concludes with an admonition to the Ordinaries not to allow the concessions to be interpreted beyond what has been stated, and to be watchful that no abuse arise or irreverence be committed. The faithful are exhorted to supply by other means for the mitigation of the laws of fast, by more fervent prayer, by acts of penance for sin committed, by closer association with the sufferings of Christ which are commemorated in the Mass and by an increase in charity towards one's neighbour.

JAMES MADDEN.

# Canon Law

## EASTER COMMUNION—MAY THE TIME BE ANTICIPATED?

Dear Rev. Sir,

It is usual for a large number of people of any parish to approach the Sacraments at Christmas. I wonder whether reception of Holy Communion at Christmas might be reckoned to suffice for the Easter Communion. It would appear that many of those who receive at Christmas will omit their Easter Communion, but will approach the Sacraments again at next Christmas. As a result of custom, Christmas occupies a bigger place in the minds of our people than does Easter, and they are more apt to respond to an appeal based upon the significance of the feast of Christmas than upon the importance of the Paschal precept. Is the law of the Church open to a benign interpretation which would allow pastors to consider the Christmas Communion as a fulfilment of the precept of annual Communion, even though the Paschal Communion is omitted?

JOHN.

### REPLY

#### *Annual Communion and Paschal Communion.*

In the first place, it should be recalled that there are two aspects to the law of Annual Communion. Firstly, there is the requirement that Holy Communion be received at least once in the year (Canon 859, paragraph 1). This is partly divine law as is clear from Our Lord's words in St. John's Chapel (Chapter 6, Verse 54, etc.), and partly ecclesiastical insofar as the Church declares the minimum frequency with which the faithful should approach the altar. Secondly, there is the purely ecclesiastical law that the precept of annual Communion should be fulfilled during Easter. If a person fails to receive Holy Communion at Easter, he is still bound to receive Holy Communion at least once during the year.

#### *Paschal time.*

The limits of the Paschal period are defined clearly in Canon 859, paragraph 2. The Easter Communion is to be received between Palm Sunday and Low Sunday. However, Local Ordinaries are empowered to extend this period for all their subjects, if they think it necessary on account of the conditions of the places and people, from the fourth

Sunday in Lent to Trinity Sunday, but no further. Moreover, local indults provide for a further extension of the period in many places. So, for example, in Australia, the period for fulfilling the Paschal precept is from Ash Wednesday until Trinity Sunday, except in the case where the Ordinary, by Apostolic indult, extends this time, according to necessity, for distant places, to the octave day of the feast of SS. Peter and Paul.

Further, the common law of Canon 859, paragraph 1, authorises deferment of Easter Communion until some time later in the year, on the advice of one's own priest (*proprius sacerdos*), for some reasonable cause. Not only the pastor, but any confessor is authorised to counsel such extension of time for fulfilment of the precept of annual Communion. A grave cause is not required. Examples given by reliable authors are those of a person who is abroad in a foreign country and, being unable to speak the foreign language, prefers to wait until he returns home; or of one who is not yet sufficiently instructed to receive Holy Communion, for example, children, adult converts. Illness, or temporary scrupulosity could also provide sufficient reason for counselling such deferment. If one looks ahead to the next Christmas, it would not seem sufficient reason to defer Holy Communion, in virtue of the power conferred by Canon 859, 1, that a person is just too lacking in religious fervour to bother about receiving Holy Communion at Easter.

#### *Anticipating Paschal time.*

No provision is made in the Canon for the priest's counselling an anticipation of the Paschal period, as suggested by our correspondent. In fact, if we reckon the year within which one must receive Holy Communion as from the beginning of the period assigned for fulfilment of the Paschal precept (in Australia, Ash Wednesday), it would appear that the previous Christmas falls within the preceding year. Therefore, those who had failed to make their Easter duty at the preceding Easter would fulfil the precept of annual Communion by approaching the Sacraments at Christmas time. The following Paschal period would then form part of the succeeding year when a new obligation of annual Easter Communion would come into force.

Therefore, the only way in which the aim of our correspondent may be met is by a special indult which would grant faculties beyond the limits of what is permitted by the existing laws. In effect, such a faculty would be to permit that, while the precept of annual Communion remains, the precept of receiving Holy Communion at Paschal time would

be abrogated. Such a faculty is not unknown in some parts of Europe where mission fathers are empowered to declare that the faithful who attend the mission given by the fathers in question and who receive the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion in the course of the mission, may satisfy their obligation of annual Confession and Paschal Communion whatever may be the time of the year.

\* \* \* \*

### EASTER COMMUNION—MUST OMISSIONS OF ANNUAL COMMUNION BE MADE GOOD?

Dear Rev. Sir,

I understand that the law of Paschal Communion is basically the Divine Law. Therefore, it seems appropriate that, if a person does not receive Holy Communion for, say, ten years, when he repents he should receive Holy Communion ten times in order to make good his previous omissions?

PRIEST.

### REPLY.

It is true that the Paschal precept is an ecclesiastical declaration of the divine law, enunciated by Our Lord in St. John's gospel, Chapter 6. However, there is no foundation for the view expressed by our correspondent. True enough, if a person fails to receive Holy Communion during the paschal period set down for a particular place, he is bound still to receive Holy Communion in the course of the year. (The obligation is *ad urgendam obligationem*, not *ad finiendam*). However, once the year has elapsed, the obligation lapses, and there arises a new obligation of receiving the Paschal Communion in the year which has just begun.

\* \* \* \*

### THE ENCYCLICAL "MEDIATOR DEI". THE PART OF THE FAITHFUL IN THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE.

Dear Rev. Sir,

I have been guiding the senior girls of a college in their study of the liturgy and, in the course of their studies, they have derived much help from analysing sections of the Encyclical "Mediator Dei". For example, they have acquired a more lively consciousness of the part of the faithful in the offering of the sacrifice of the Mass. Now they wish to give expression to this new interest and enthusiasm by introducing in



their College Chapel, at least on more solemn occasions some of the external methods of joining in the sacrifice which are mentioned in the Encyclical. Specifically, they propose to have the dialogue Mass and an Offertory procession. Also, they wish to communicate from hosts consecrated at the Mass at which they receive. I am aware of some practical difficulties which will be encountered. However, some of them quote the words of the encyclical "against" me, and insist that the Pope's words are preceptive in the matters mentioned. I am sure you are familiar with the passages in question. Would you kindly advise me as to the obligation and the wisdom of acceding to the students' request.

CHAPLAIN.

### REPLY.

In the first of the passages in question, the Holy Father sets out to explain in what sense the faithful assisting at Mass are said to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice. "First there are remote reasons; the fact that in a number of cases the faithful assisting at Mass recite their prayers alternately with those of the priest; the fact that sometimes in ancient days more frequently, they present bread and wine to the sacred ministers in order that they may become the body and blood of Christ; the fact that they give alms in order that the priest may offer the Divine Victim for their intention". (Translation C.T.S. London, n. 94). The Holy Father then proceeds to explain the more profound sense in which the faithful offer the sacrifice *through* the priest and *with* the priest.

In regard to the dialogue Mass and to the offering of bread and wine by the faithful, the Holy Father's words cannot be constructed as a precept. He is merely drawing attention to the fact that these practices actually occur, and that they demonstrate the people's part in offering sacrifice. As to where and in what circumstances the practice may be put into effect, we should consult the laws and directives issued already to regulate these matters.

#### *Dialogue Mass.*

The governing principle is that the local ordinary should decide in individual cases on the advisability of establishing this practice. In several private rescripts bearing on this subject, the Sacred Congregation of Rites has pointed out that things in themselves lawful are not always expedient, and that in the case under discussion, it may well happen that the priest celebrating, or the faithful assisting at Mass, would be unduly distracted. It is, therefore, for the Ordinary to control this form of liturgical piety according to his prudent discretion.

*Offertory Procession.*

When observing that the faithful sometimes present the bread and wine to the sacred ministers in order that these gifts may become the Body and Blood of Christ, the Holy Father refers particularly to ancient practices, but also to such remnants of the ancient practice as are found in the liturgy to-day. An outstanding example in the Roman rite is in the Mass of the Consecration of a Bishop. The ancient custom is continued also in the Ambrosian rite.

Unless the practice is sanctioned by the rubrics of the local rite or by some local custom, it appears that it may not be permitted, as it involves an interruption of the Mass, contrary to the rubrics. This interpretation is borne out by the rubric which requires that the Hosts to be consecrated at Mass should be on the corporal at the commencement of the Mass.

No doubt it may be possible to secure an apostolic indult with a view to introducing the practice of the faithful's offering gifts of bread and wine at the Offertory of the Mass. However, practical difficulties should not be overlooked, such as would occur in a parish church at a Sunday Mass. Such considerations as the time needed to complete Mass, or the inconvenience of moving a large crowd from the seats to the altar, and then back to the seats, are matters having an intimate bearing on the religious fervour of the congregation. Moreover, while recognising that an offertory procession may be instructive and impressive, it is questionable as to whether it would be more effective than good instruction given in conjunction with the use of the missal. Finally, it would raise new difficulties in the matter of enforcing the laws made with a view to ensuring that suitable breads and wine are used in the Mass.

*Communicating with Hosts consecrated at the same Mass.*

In speaking of Holy Communion of the faithful, the Holy Father praises the devotion of those who, in order to emphasise yet more the part of the faithful in offering the Mass, would have them receive particles consecrated at the same Mass. At the same time, quoting from an Encyclical of Pope Benedict XIV, he insists that the sacrifice is shared by the faithful, even when they communicate with Hosts previously consecrated.

"In this connection the Council of Trent, echoing the voice of Jesus Christ and His Immaculate Bride, expressed the urgent desire that 'at every Mass the faithful presented should not only make a spiritual Com-

munion, but receive the Eucharist sacramentally and so gain more abundant fruit from this Sacrifice'. Indeed Pope Benedict XIV, in order that it might be more evident that by receiving Holy Communion the faithful take part in the Sacrifice, praised the devotion that prompts the desire of some not only to communicate when present at Mass, but preferably to receive particles consecrated at the same Mass—although, as he himself explains, the Sacrifice is shared by the faithful even when they communicate with Hosts previously consecrated". (n. 125, 126).

"It is very fitting that the faithful, in accordance with the liturgical law, should approach Holy Communion after the priest has communicated at the altar'; and, as we have already said, it is praiseworthy that those who are present at Mass should receive particles which have been consecrated at the same Mass, and so give real fulfilment to the words, 'that as many of us as have received the Body and Blood of Thy Son by partaking of this altar may be filled with every Heavenly blessing and grace'." (n. 128).

It cannot be claimed, with good reason, that the Holy Father is issuing a precept for the priest to arrange that the faithful may receive in Holy Communion particles consecrated at the same Mass. It is a counsel to do something which is laudable and which is helpful to a more complete realisation of the part played by the communicants in offering the Mass. Accordingly, the recommendation is subject to a consideration of the practical difficulties involved. These are obvious enough when Mass is being said at an altar at which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. Canons concerning reservation of the Blessed Sacrament demand that the Hosts used for consecration must be of recent origin and must be renewed frequently, the old ones being consumed, so that there is no danger of corruption. (Canon 1272).

Provided that these difficulties do not render the scheme impracticable, it may be said in truth that the practice in question is encouraged by the Holy Father in the words of the Encyclical, but not that it is the subject of a precept.

JAMES CARROLL.

# Liturgy

## ABSOLUTION BEFORE AND BLESSING AFTER DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION OUTSIDE OF MASS.

Dear Rev. Sir,

When giving Communion to a community of sisters immediately before or after a Requiem Mass, should the blessing be given? In the event of there being but one communicant, is the absolution *Misereatur vestri* . . . always given in the plural number?

R.B.

### REPLY.

The Roman Ritual states that when Communion is given immediately before or after a private Mass, the blessing at the end is omitted if black vestments are being worn (Tit. iv, c. 2, n. 13).

The Sacred Congregation of Rites in a decree of 16th November, 1906, stated that if a priest gives Communion to a single sick person he uses the formula: *Misereatur tui*. If, however, the sick person is sufficiently near the altar to receive Communion during Mass, then the plural form *Misereatur vestri* must be used. The Ritual in describing the rite for Communion of the sick makes provision for the use of the singular or plural form, according as there is one or more persons in the same room or place to receive Communion (Tit. iv, c. 4, n. 17), but it makes no such provision in the rite for the distribution of Communion during or outside of Mass. The administration of Communion to a sick person apart from Mass is a private function, whereas the Communion of a single person in a church, even outside of Mass, is a public act and consequently the plural form must always be used.

\*

\*

\*

## TABERNACLE VEIL.

Dear Rev. Sir,

Does a tabernacle need to be completely covered by the veil, or is it in order to have the door exposed, especially if the door be of gold or other precious metal?

CURATE.

### REPLY.

Several Decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites have insisted upon the necessity of the tabernacle being covered by a veil when the Blessed Sacrament is present (3520; 4000, i; 4137). The veil should



normally cover the whole tabernacle, top and sides and front. Some writers suggest that it is permissible to gather the veil in front in order that the door may be seen, especially when the door is made of precious metal or is richly decorated. In the absence of any explicit instructions to the contrary, this practice seems to be quite lawful. It is certainly more in accord with the legislation, than the small curtain that one sometimes sees hanging in front of the tabernacle door, even when the Blessed Sacrament is not present.

\*

\*

\*

\*

### SOME RECENT DECREES.

**THE BUSKINS AND SANDALS.** In a Decree of 4th December, 1952, the Sacred Congregation of Rites issued new directions for the putting on of the buskins and sandals in Pontifical functions. Whenever the rubrics require the Bishop to wear the buskins and sandals, these are never to be put on in the Church or at the throne or at the faldstool, but must be put on either in the sacristy, which is separate from the church, or at home.

**THE CAPPА MAGNA AND SOUTANE.** The Holy Father in a *Motu Proprio* of 30th November, 1952, introduced some modifications in the dress of Cardinals. The train is to be removed from both the red and the purple soutane. The train of the Cappa is to be reduced to about half its present size. The purple vestments (soutane, mantelletta, mozzetta) will in future be made of woollen material, not silk. Subsequently, the Sacred Congregation of Rites was asked whether the regulations of the abovementioned *Motu Proprio* regarding the soutane and the Cappa Magna of Cardinals must be extended to the soutane and the Cappa Magna of Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops of the Holy Roman Church, and also Abbots, whether secular or regular, who enjoy such privileges. Secondly, the question was asked whether the soutane of Prothonotaries, Prelates, and others who enjoy the privileges of Prelates should be without a train. The reply of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, given on 4th December, 1952, was in the affirmative to both questions. Those affected by the above reply should, then, take steps to have the necessary alterations made to their vestments.

**THE ABLUTIONS WHEN BINATING.** The Apostolic Constitution: *Christus Dominus* of Pope Pius XII, concerning the discipline for the observance of the eucharistic fast, is treated at length elsewhere in this number. Nevertheless, it may be opportune to mention here the provi-

sion made for taking the ablutions at the end of Mass, when the priest is to offer a second or third Mass on the same day. The Constitution states that those who celebrate two or three Masses, may take the ablutions, for which, however, in this instance, water alone is employed, and not wine. The Instruction adds that if a priest, who has to say two or three Masses, inadvertently takes the ablutions with wine, then, this will not prevent his saying a second or a third Mass. Those who celebrate the Masses one after another on Christmas Day and All Souls' Day must observe the rubrics of the Missal as to the ablutions. The new provisions are not preceptive, but are available for all who wish to use them.

\*

\*

\*

\*

### THE MASS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. A COMMENTARY.

The Mass of the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist found among the votive Masses of the Roman Missal is the same as the Mass for the Feast of Corpus Christi. The Mass in its present form is the work of St. Thomas Aquinas.

INTROIT. *Psalm 80. He fed them with the fat of the wheat: and filled them with honey out of the rock. Rejoice to God our helper: sing aloud to the God of Jacob.*

The abundance and richness of food, of wheat and honey, promised to those who are faithful to the Lord is a fitting symbol of the spiritual food given by Christ to His followers. The human mind can scarcely imagine a food of greater richness than the Body and Blood of Christ Himself. Well might the christian people proclaim in the words of this festal chant: Rejoice to God our helper; sing aloud to the God of Jacob.

COLLECT. *A God, who in this wonderful Sacrament hast left us a memorial of thy Passion: grant us, we beseech thee, so to venerate the sacred mysteries of thy Body and Blood, that we may ever feel within us the fruit of thy redemption.*

St. Thomas has declared that the Eucharist has a threefold significance. In respect to the past, in as much, namely, as it is commemorative of the Passion of our Lord, which was a true sacrifice. In this sense the Eucharist is called a sacrifice (cfr. *Summa theol.* III, 73, 4). Leaving the other two names of the Eucharist for the time being, it is sufficient to observe that the Angelic Doctor has built the three

prayers of the Mass, Collect, Secret, and Postcommunion, upon the idea of this threefold significance of the Eucharist. In the Collect it is the Eucharist as Sacrifice that determines the shape of our petition to the heavenly Father. The Mass renews each day and unceasingly the sacrifice of the Cross, 'for as often as you shall at this bread and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until he come' (1 Cor. 11, 26). The Mass renews each day for all nations and generations the sacrifice of the Cross. The sacrifice of the Mass provides us with an opportunity of uniting ourselves to the sacrifice of Calvary, in order that we may become sharers in the fruits of that sacrifice. 'We might say that on Calvary Christ has provided a bath of expiation and salvation, filled with the blood He has shed for us; but unless men plunge into it and there wash away the stains of their sins, they cannot be cleansed and saved' (Pius XII: *Mediator Dei*, E.C.T.S., p. 39). The sacrifice produces its effect *ex opere operato*, but the fullness of its efficacy depends upon the dispositions with which we approach It. Rightly, then, ought we ask God to grant us the grace so to love and venerate this sacrament that we may always approach It with those dispositions of soul necessary for a more abundant share of its fruitfulness.

EPISTLE. I Corinthians, XI, 23-29.

The epistle is taken from the earliest written account of the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. The Apostle was perturbed to hear of a number of abuses that had crept into the church at Corinth in connection with the celebration of the Eucharist and the agape. To impress upon those early christians the unbecomingness of such behaviour, St. Paul reminds them of the circumstances of the institution of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the renewal of the mysteries of the Passion and Death of our Saviour; to partake of this sacrament unworthily is to dishonour the Body and Blood of Christ. Therefore, we must prepare ourselves before approaching the Holy Table.

GRADUAL. *The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord, and thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and fillest every living creature with thy blessing.*

*Alleluia, alleluia. My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him.*

Psalm 144, from which the Gradual is taken, is a hymn of praise of the greatness and goodness of God. God in His providence provides

for the needs of all His creatures, who, in turn, look to Him with the confident hope that they will receive 'meat in due season'. The same divine providence has manifested itself in an even more liberal manner in the New Covenant. Not only do we receive food sufficient for our material needs, but, in the Eucharist, we are given the Body and Blood of Christ as the food of our soul. As this spiritual Food brings to us the person of Christ, the Author of all graces, we receive in the Eucharist an abundance of blessings that is adequate for all our possible needs.

The Alleluia verse recalls, in the very words of our divine Saviour, the primary effect of our reception of Communion, namely, our union with Christ. In an endeavour to find some example to illustrate the intimacy of this union between Christ and the communicant, St. Cyril of Alexandria compares it to the fusion of two pieces of melted wax. Christ abides in us and we abide in Christ.

GOSPEL. St. John VI, 56-59.

The gospel records the final part of the discourse of our Lord in the Synagogue at Capharnaum. The Eucharist enables us to become sharers in the life of the Godhead. From all eternity, the Father gives to the Son that life which is His own. It is this life that we receive when we receive the Bread of Life. Our soul becomes a sanctuary of the most holy Trinity. The Food and Drink that we have received as the nourishment of our souls is capable of communicating to our soul and body an existence as unending as that which Christ Himself received from the Father: 'he that eateth this bread shall live forever'.

OFFERTORY. *The priests of the Lord offer incense and loaves to God, and therefore they shall be holy to their God, and shall not defile his name.*

The passage from the book of Leviticus (XXI, 6) describes the high degree of sanctity required of the priests of the Old Law. A fortiori how much greater a degree of sanctity is demanded of the ministers of the New Covenant, of which the Old was merely a shadow. How zealous we should be that our gifts, our prayers and our work, shall not defile the name of the Lord.

SECRET. *In thy mercy, O Lord, we beseech thee, grant to thy Church the gifts of unity and peace, which are mystically shown forth in the offerings we make to thee.*

The second significance of the Eucharist, mentioned by St. Thomas in the article referred to above, regards the present, namely the



unity of the Church, to which men are united by this sacrament. And in this sense it is called communion or synaxis. Unity and peace is the keynote of the Secret. Unity and peace are always closely allied; dissension and division exist only where there is a multiplicity. Our Divine Saviour is, in the words of St. Cyprian, 'the doctor of peace and the master of unity'. Christ died 'not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed' (John XI, 52). By virtue of the merits of Christ, we have become the adopted sons of the one Father, begotten by the same baptism and by the same faith, animated by the same Spirit, nourished by the same spiritual Food, joined to the same organism, the Mystical Body of Christ, to which we are more closely united according as we are more perfectly christian. The elements of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the bread and wine should be for us a constant reminder of the unity and peace that ought exist among us. As the many grains of wheat form but one bread, and the many grapes but one wine, so we, who partake of the one Body and Blood of Christ, must strive to cultivate a peace and unity among ourselves worthy of our calling.

COMMUNION. *As often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show forth the death of the Lord, until he come: therefore whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*

The Communion verse repeats a section of the words of St. Paul previously read in the Epistle. The Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross; we must, then, ensure that we are worthy to become sharers in that sacrifice.

POSTCOMMUNION. *Grant us, O Lord, we beseech thee, that we may have to the full that eternal enjoyment of thy Godhead, which is prefigured by thy precious Body and Blood which we receive in this present life.*

Not only does the Eucharist provide for our needs in this present life, it is, moreover, a pledge of eternal glory in the life to come. Sanctifying grace, which is increased in our souls each time we receive Holy Communion worthily, is the seed of glory. The sacramental union is a figure of the union between God and the soul in the beatific vision, when the obscure light of faith will give way to the glorious vision of God face to face. At the same time, the blessed Eucharist is the most efficacious means that we have at our disposal to attain to the eternal enjoyment of union with God.

# Homiletics

## THE EUCHARIST A BOND OF FRATERNAL CHARITY.

Our Christian faith offers us a practical rule of life. It governs our conduct in all waking moments. We ought not to be surprised, then, if we find that we are required to practice not simply one or other virtue, but rather many virtues, according to the various aspects of our daily life. Some virtues are more fundamental than others, some more important because they affect a greater part of our time. Whatever may be the standards that we use, there can be no doubting the primary importance of fraternal charity in the life of every Christian. The feature of our conduct that should immediately identify us as Christians is the love and kindness that we manifest towards our fellow-men. "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you have love one for other" is the norm given us by Christ. Nor were these words simply a chance remark, they were the expression of the same doctrine that Christ had explained so frequently. The doctor of the law was taught that two commandments are all-important: the first, "love God"; and the second, like the first, "love thy neighbour as thyself". The full significance of the second commandment was illustrated by our divine Master in the parable of the Good Samaritan. On the evening before He died, when Christ had gathered around Him His apostles, after instituting the Blessed Eucharist, He prayed to His heavenly Father for His disciples. "Holy Father", he prayed, "keep them true to Thy name . . . that they may be one, as we are one. . . . It is not only for them that I pray. I pray for those who are to find faith in Me through their words; that they may all be one, that they, too, may be one in us, as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee". The realisation of this ideal of fraternal love, of unity and of harmony, is one of our chief tasks in life. Christ has imposed the obligation and, at the same time, He has given us the means whereby we may fulfil the obligation—Christ has given us the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the Sacrament of love and union with Christ Himself, and the Sacrament which also unites us to our fellow-men in Christ.

The Eucharist is a sacrifice—the renewal of the sacrifice of the Cross. "As often as you shall eat this bread and drink this chalice you shall show forth the death of the Lord". Christ has given us this sacrifice in order that we may become sharers in His sacrifice; that we may

unite ourselves to Him, become co-victims with Him, and so offer ourselves, in union with Him, to our heavenly Father. Christ died for all men without exception—even in His last moments His thoughts were for His enemies: "Father, forgive them". The prayers of the Mass show us that the sacrifice of the Mass is offered for the salvation of the whole world. When, therefore, we assist at the Holy Sacrifice we must put on the mind of Christ. As we offer to God, in union with the sacrifice of Christ, ourselves, our lives, our prayers, our work, we must offer ourselves for the same purpose as Christ offers Himself, that is, for the salvation of all men. We must praise and thank God on behalf of all mankind, on behalf of those who are unable to thank Him, as well as on behalf of those who are unwilling to give God His due. When our minds are filled with these thoughts we cannot but appreciate more fully our duties towards our neighbour. The Blood of the Saviour has flowed for us all. Our assisting at the Sacrifice of the Mass, our uniting of ourselves to the victim of the Sacrifice, Jesus Christ, reminds us that the Blood of Christ is the bond that unites us to Him, and, in Him, to our fellow-men. This truth should be the mould that shapes our actions, it should be the incentive for us to give practical expression to our love of our neighbour. In the degree in which our union with Christ in His sacrifice is more perfect, so much the greater will be our love for our fellow-men, our anxiety for their welfare, and our desire to be united to them in peace and harmony.

Our sacrificial union with Christ and our fellow-men is further perfected by our reception of Holy Communion. Holy Communion brings us to the Body and Blood of our divine Saviour as the food of our souls. St. Paul, writing to the first Christians in Corinth, asked them: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" Each one who receives Communion is united to Christ, and all who are united to Christ are united to each other in Christ. There is only one bread, as St. Paul says, and we all make one body, since we all partake of that one bread. The union of grace by which we were united to Christ by Baptism is strengthened and perfected by each worthy Communion that we make. We are all members of the one Mystical Body of Christ, the Church; we are all branches of the one vine, who is Christ. As members of that body, branches of that vine, we are all nourished by the same food—the Blessed Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ. This supernatural

food unites us to Christ—"He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him"—and that union of each one with Christ established a bond of union between all who are so united to Christ, they are all united together in Christ. Truly may the Sacrament of the Eucharist be called the most efficacious means of uniting men to each other in the bond of charity.

When our divine Saviour instituted the Blessed Eucharist He selected bread and wine to be the elements of this Sacrament. By His authority and power, these elements are changed into His Body and Blood. In making this choice, our Lord chose elements that of themselves remind us of the effects which this Sacrament produces in those who receive it worthily, the union of men in Christ. The many grains of wheat are ground to make the one bread; the many grapes are crushed to make the one wine. So it is with us. We are the many who receive the one food, the Body and Blood of Christ, and, by this food, we are united to Christ and to our fellow-men to form the one body—the Mystical Body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head and we are the members.

Christ instituted the Eucharist as Food, the Food of our souls. The Eucharist is, as the Church so frequently calls it in her prayers, the "heavenly banquet", of which we are partakers. What symbol of union and friendship is better known to us than that of a banquet? In the Eucharist we have the heavenly banquet of the Christian family. Those who partake of that banquet are bound together by the bonds of love that flow into their souls from the spiritual Food, the Body and Blood of Christ. The Eucharist was instituted at the Last Supper, when Christ gathered the Apostles around Him to eat the Passover with them. The same divine Master now gathers us around Him at the altar and gives to each of us the new Passover, the Bread of eternal life.

As often as we assist at Mass, as often as we receive Holy Communion, let us be mindful of the special graces poured into our souls by this Sacrament. Recalling our union with Christ, let us also bear in mind our union with our fellow-men in Christ, and, inspired by the consciousness of this truth, let us strive to accomplish in our lives what our divine Master asked of us: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you have love, one for another".

P. L. MURPHY.



## Notes

Only one advanced copy of this important book [*A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. London. Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1953. English price, £4/4/- net] is to hand as we write, for it was

published only on February 5 of this year. It is impossible to have it reviewed in the present number of the *A.C.R.*, but a descriptive notice of it should be given, as soon as possible. A full review will appear later. The Commentary is

THE NEW  
CATHOLIC  
COMMENTARY.

due to the initiative of the English Catholic Biblical Association. The idea was first put forward at a meeting held in 1942 at Cambridge. While that idea was fermenting in the minds of those who cherished it, great encouragement came through the Papal Encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* of September 30, 1943. In December of that year a small group of the members of the Association discussed the prospect of a one-volume Catholic commentary in detail, and decided to accept responsibility for it as the Editorial Committee. Archbishop (now Cardinal) Griffin, who had just succeeded to the See of Westminster, gave the venture his full approval and blessing.

The Editorial Committee, which consisted of a General Editor, Dom Bernard Orchard (also special editor for New Testament), an Old Testament Editor, Father Edmund Sutcliffe, S.J., and two others: Dr. Reginald Fuller, Secretary of the Catholic Biblical Association, and Dom Ralph Russell, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer. It was a small committee, but they were men working in perfect agreement. Otherwise the production of such a bulky work might have taken more than the nine years it has actually taken.

In 1944 the conscription of contributors and the assignment of tasks began. Besides the four mentioned, the roll of contributors amounted to thirty-nine, nearly all of them graduates of the Papal Biblical Institute at Rome or the Ecole Biblique at Jerusalem. They represented the Catholic Biblical scholarship of Great Britain, Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, Malta. Two of the contributors were of German and Austrian nationality respectively, but had taught Scripture and Theology in England in years gone by.

This notice is merely descriptive, but it is also enthusiastic. The very look of the book bespeaks nobility—Messrs. Nelson and Sons hav-

ing done their work excellently. The volume is a very large one in double columns, covering more than 1300 pages. The paper is good and the printing, though small and dense, is admirably clear. The paragraphing and systems of cross reference are a most welcome feature. The index is splendidly thorough, and the sixteen pages of maps in several colours seem to be very creditable specimens of cartography.

The volume carries a commentary on each of the 72 books of the Bible, each having its own special introduction. The biblical text is that of the current Douai version corrected by the commentators as often as needed. Naturally the text itself is not printed in the work. One must have the Douai at hand, but the Westminster or Knox version may also be used.

Besides commentary there are 18 articles of general biblical introduction covering such subjects as Canon, Versions, Higher Criticism, physical and political Geography of biblical lands, History, Archaeology, etc., etc.

There are four introductory articles to the Old Testament: 1) Its meaning, 2) the Religion of Israel, 3) the Gentile Neighbours, 4) O.T. Chronology.

Articles of introduction to the New Testament include titles like: Textual Criticism, Jewish World, Pagan World, the Synoptic Problem, the Second Coming, N.T. Chronology, etc., etc. There are twelve such articles.

In the first English review of the volume, that which appeared in the London *Tablet* (Feb. 8, 1953), Monsignor Knox described the New Commentary as a monument of scholarship. It will undoubtedly be of incalculable utility to all who are interested in Sacred Scripture: priests, brothers, sisters, and the educated Catholic laity who seem to have an ever-growing thirst for the fountains of Catholic truth.

W.L.

## Book Reviews

SATAN. Edited by Père Bruno de Jesu-Marie, O.C.D. Sheed and Ward, London, 1951, pp. XXV-506. 30/- ster.

This book is a revelation. Catholics, of course, believe in Satan; few, however, know little more about him than his name and the popular caricatures by which he is so often represented. The contemporary widespread scepticism as to his existence and widespread influence on events has unwittingly penetrated and infested the Catholic mind to such an extent, that only too frequently it fails to put into practice the implications of its belief. "*Satan*" throws the searchlight of faith and reason onto the "Prince of Darkness," and the many facets of his extraordinary character and power are revealed in their stark and terrible reality—an ugly vision calculated to dissipate scepticism in this case for all time.

"*Satan*" is not the work of one author, nor was it, for the most part, written originally in English. It takes the form of a symposium for which thirty-two scholars have written essays, and is based upon a volume of the series *Collection de Psychologie Religieuse, ETUDES CARMELITAINES*, published in French by Desclée de Brouwer, to which some of the thirty-two essays in "*Satan*" have been added.

The book is divided into five parts meant to deal with what the Introduction calls the "theological" and the "psychological" Satan. Firstly, there are seven essays on "*Satan's existence and nature*", followed, then, by four under the heading, "*The place of the devil outside Christianity*". By far the largest section is given over to "*Possession and Diabolism*" in the third part. There are a number of studies—all very thorough and scholarly—on "*The Devil in Art and Literature*", the whole work being brought to a close with two powerful essays on "*Deicide*". (The editor gives us a brief note at the beginning of the last essay about its author; in this note we find a most striking quote from Catherine Emmerich, and which the learned author interprets as being fulfilled in Hitler. We wonder whether its fulfilment is still to come? At any rate, the quote bears repetition in this context: "In the midst of hell was a chasm of darkness: Lucifer was thrown into it loaded with chains, and black vapours poured about him. All this took place according to certain divine commands. I learnt that Lucifer was to be unleashed for a time—fifty or sixty years before the year 2000 after Christ, if I am not mistaken"!)

From the pen of the late distinguished Dominican, Fr. Walter Farrell, comes the opening essay. Following St. Thomas closely, he offers us a very able and ornate study of the nature of Satan, his power, and the nature of his sin. Bernard Leeming's S.J. "The Adversary" is painstaking; it stresses above all that Satan's hostility does not derive from any Manichean theory. One of the most clearly expressed essays is from the pen of the well-known Père de Tonquedec, S.J., on Satan's activity in the world. And it is sane, in a matter where sanity and balance are pearls of great price. The devil is certainly responsible for many calamities of natural appearance; on the other hand, it is absurd to see him everywhere in the ills that afflict men and nations. A. Lefèvre, S.J., writes on "*Angel or Monster*"; H. I. Morrou's "*The Fallen Angel*" reveals rare power of penetration. His concluding few sentences seem to us to touch the very heart of the matter: "Evil is something that need not have existed. It is the outcome of a history as impossible to foresee as anything else, and more tragic than any other history, for it reveals in all its depth and ambivalence the mystery of liberty. Satan, an angel, is the free being who first chose to move away from the source of all being and towards the nothingness from which he had been drawn" (pp. 81-83). The first part ends with studies devoted to "*The Devil in the writings of St. John of the Cross*" and in the writings of St. Theresa of Jesus.

J. Henninger, O.S.B., in his "*The Adversary of God in primitive religions*", concludes from a detailed examination to the moral necessity of divine revelation for any satisfactory explanation of the *mysterium iniquitatis*. There is a longish note on Iranian dualism, i.e., Mazdeism, followed by a very thorough and lengthy and illuminating consideration of the Manichean devil.

The third part contains some of the most valuable essays in the whole book. F. M. Catherinet's article on "Demoniacs in the Gospel" is searching. He makes the point, very strongly, that deliverance of possessed persons is essentially a different matter from the cure of mere disease—a point which is sometimes overlooked in modern medical science. "Exorcism and Diabolical Manifestation", by F. X. Maquart, is, as one would expect from such a scholar, orderly, exact, and so deft, that one suspects more than theoretical acquaintance with the subject dealt with. There are two essays dealing with some individual cases of diabolic influence and possession, but one would have liked to have been given instances from modern missionary experience, in Dom Kilger's



"*The Devil and the conversion of the pagan*". The missionaries from the Pacific Islands can tell of striking cases of diabolic influence among the pagan there. The distinguished French physician, Jean Lhermitte, gives us an excellent study on abnormal medical states which could be confused with possession, and his article serves to emphasise the need of the theologian's and doctor's working hand in hand in suspected, and even real, cases of possession.

The section given over to "*The Devil in Art and Literature*" is fascinating. Two articles—excellent indeed—are general in character: "*The Devil in Art*," by Germain Bazin, and "*The Devil in Contemporary Literature*," by Claude-Edmonde Magny. Five handle specific aspects of the matter in essays covering the Devil in Dante, Milton, Blake, Balzac, Gogol, Dostoievski. Bazin's article sees much of the ugliness, chaos, disorder, the "unnatural creation", of some examples of modern art, as deep down, a diabolic perversion. It is, of course, absurd to condemn all modern art out of hand. On the other hand, much of it is, without doubt, a definite manifestation of some of the ugly and hideous features, essential, one might say, to our modern civilization, lost, or at least aimlessly wandering, philosophically and theologically. Much confusion is discussing the merits and demerits of modern art has its origin in the very confusion, or ignorance, or perversion of much modern thought. We are, of course, not presuming to judge of the subjective intention of the artist. At any rate, if for no other reason than that the matter is being "aired" very much at the present moment, we quote something of Bazin, in the belief that the principles involved cover a wider field than just art. "The fact that the West has shown so little aptitude for demonology in art makes its sudden reappearance in our own time a matter of particular concern. In the early years of 1900, in the middle of the triumphant festivities and noisy jubilation of the people of the West, all quite intoxicated at the thought of the coming century of Progress in which man's final happiness was to be realised, the authentic face of the Prince of Discord appears with the effect of a thunderclap. This time Satan chooses to make his appearance in negro masks, and in Picasso's "*Demoiselles d'Avignon*" (1909) his grin leers out in prophecy of the bestiality which was to be unleashed upon the world a few years later . . . Thirty years later the same prophetic genius inspired by the [Spanish] civil war . . . conceived in "*Guernica*" (1936), the callous disintegration of the human countenance . . . These recent pictures of Picasso, which took people by storm and even caused a great

deal of scandal, bear all the marks of the diabolic spirit, now engaged in an attack on the masterpiece of Creation itself. Picasso takes all the separate features of the human face, which has burst into fragments as though under the effect of a high explosive, and puts them together again, but according to no principle except that of incongruity. These leering puzzles are perhaps the most typical example that can be found of that chaotic discontinuity, that hatred of all unity, which seems to be the very essence of the demonic style. I know that if Picasso were asked about this he would maintain that he had been guided in these works by one consideration only: the search for beauty. But that is exactly the diabolic claim. 'Quis ut Deus', cried St. Michael, felling the Prince of Pride with a sudden flash of light". (pp. 365-6).

"*The Devil in Contemporary Literature*," by Magny, is outstanding. Satan, as presented in Gide, Bernanos, Graham Greene, Claudel, Dostoevski, and Jouhandeau—particularly in Gide and Bernanos—is considered with rare literary and psychological insight.

This, then, is a brief consideration of a most unusual book. It has of course the natural shortcomings of such a work—needless repetition, even, it would seem, one or two unexpected contradictions between articles. But it is a unique book, and we would say a necessary book, if one is to understand so much of the evil present in our world.

H.G.D.

\* \* \* \*

THE HEART OF ST. THERESE, by L'Abbé André Combes. Translated by a Carmelite Nun. Dublin: Gill, 1952. 122 pp. 12/6 (Eng.).

The name of L'Abbé Combes is becoming familiar to English readers in translations of his books about St. Thérèse of Lisieux. He is a scholar of repute in France, where, among his many activities, is his research at the *Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique*. It was while teaching a course in comparative mysticism at the *Institut Catholique* in Paris that he investigated the spiritual doctrine of St. Thérèse; and we have reason to be grateful for his careful analysis of her way of holiness. For those who have studied along those lines for themselves there may be nothing new in this book, but the author does light up some important aspects of her life. Calling attention to the number of times she uses in her writings the name of Jesus, he maintains that Thérèse is the Saint of the Holy Name of Jesus".

Passing from the extraordinary eucharistic grace of her First Communion, when Jesus showed himself to her as so loving and so

lovable, the author analyses to our advantage the mystery of the continual aridity that possessed her soul during the whole of her religious life. He shows how triumphant the saint was over the trial, bearing it with docility and cheerfulness; and since a Pope has not hesitated to call her "a word of God to us", there must be a lesson in it for us. Monsieur L'Abbé admits the explanation most of us have accepted about this trial: that "Thérèse's route is from love to love, through darkness, by the road of pure trust". But he shows that the saint went further than that in her acceptance of the trial, and she teaches souls the supernatural truth: "When the Saviour is imploring them to use to the full their productive energies, to cherish the most ambitious hopes, then the apparent 'forgetfulness' of Jesus is the strongest bond of love . . . an urge to become divine". Thus the trial becomes the imprint of the Holy Face on the faithful soul. At various points the biographer stresses the noble stature of this soul to whom we should be chary of applying the term, little. "To live for love is to bear in one's heart the Incarnate Word, the Word of God Himself. One has to be very prudent in talking of littleness in connection with such a soul, for in her littleness she recognised magnificently her dignity, her true greatness".

In reading the chapter entitled, "The Lever of Love", we realise afresh the marvellous apostolate that was hers merely by living a life of prayer: "She remains doggedly faithful to prayer in spite of the trials of all kinds that she endures in it, because she knows perfectly well that she fulfils her vocation in this exercise. It is her calling, as it is that of all the saints, to uplift the world. That is what she is doing when her love rests in love". Coming to the lesson of her death, the biographer is encouraging in his interpretation of that awe-inspiring phrase that "she died of love". We are inclined to withdraw when confronted by a phenomenon so ethereal. Yet we must take the saint's word that we shall never have to part company with her on her way. So we are glad to have brought before us again her words, when, as so often, she herself becomes the interpreter of her secrets: "I am glad to die only because death is the expression of God's will for me". Her life ends on the note that opened her conscious service of God, and that she sustained through all vicissitudes: "The only thing that contents me is to do God's will". So we begin our efforts all over again, encouraged by the thought that "to accept, to desire, to love death because it is seen to be the expression of God's will, is to prepare oneself to die of love".

M.O.

THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE CATHOLIC MEDICAL GUILD OF ST. LUKE. Series IV, No. 4. Edited by N.S.W. Branch, Sydney, 1953. 59 pp.

Owing to the heavy costs of printing, it appeared that these interesting *Transactions* had ceased publication. But after three years' silence, happily, the members of the *Catholic Medical Guild of St. Luke* have issued a new number, which displays a strong spirit to survive. Indeed, the editorial is written in a spirit of confidence in the future. The editors have wisely decided to make the *Transactions* essentially professional, and so this present number contains the record of a symposium on homosexuality, which was opened by the present Commissioner of Police, Mr. Delaney, who was followed by a barrister, a psychiatrist and a theologian. A general discussion was then held. One can easily see the advantage to be gained by such a discussion, and the interest aroused is seen in the lively discussion of the papers. Then follows a paper by Dr. M. J. Dwyer, of South Australia, on artificial insemination among human beings. Next the papers are given of the symposium on diseases of the heart and lungs in pregnancy, in which the same method was observed as in the earlier symposium. Finally there is an article on St. John Chrysostom and his interest in medical affairs and terms. The *Transactions* in their new form will win the approval of the members of the Guild, and will be a valuable source of reference, spreading Catholic principle as concerned with the practice of medicine. Outside medical circles, members of the clergy will be interested in these discussions of thorny questions, which are continually meeting them in their pastoral work and in their direction of souls. The Catholic doctors, too, would be obliged if the clergy helped them, by purchasing the *Transactions*, to continue their splendid work. A limited number of copies has been reserved for the clergy, who can obtain copies either from Dr. G. L. McDonald, 143 Macquarie Street, Sydney, or from Rev. J. Kenny, S.J., Canisius College, Pymble, N.S.W. The price of this present number is 5/- to be sent to Dr. McDonald, or to Father Kenny.

T.V.

\*

\*

\*

\*

WOMAN TO-DAY, by John Fitzsimons. Sheed & Ward. 1952. 190 pp. 8/6d (Eng.).

Having attentively read this book by Father Fitzsimons, we ask ourselves: Who will be its readers? Very few women; perhaps fewer



men, for it is not easy reading. That is not to its discredit. It is so thoughtfully written, and the subject is of such perennial interest that it calls for readers. A chapter at a sitting would provide an excellent course of reading for a study circle where the director could omit a few passages which are obvious to any woman. The general theme of the book needs discussion rather than individual perusal; as you read, innumerable points crop up and you look round for some one to discuss them with. This is surely to concede that it is a valuable book for anyone in sympathy with "the causes of woman's distress in our industrial society, arising chiefly from her lack of status now that the home no longer has the central place which it formerly enjoyed".

The author is competent for the research, having thought long over his subject, read widely in sociology along these lines, and had practical experience in dealing with the problems of the working-girl to-day, both in England and America. In several revealing tables of statistics of marriage and divorce, Australian figures are also given, showing that the same trends are at work in the three countries. As we have to cultivate our own plot, Australian readers will be interested to see the suggestions put forward by the English author. Among other conditions, he notes that in his own country almost every girl from the primary schools is drawn into the factory, where she becomes "a mentally numbered machine-minder". There, the average girl does not consider the work that she does is of any value, and looks on it as a more or less disagreeable way of filling in the time until she gets married. She sits before the conveyor belt all day doing some minute bit of piece-work, her actions so mechanical that they hardly interrupt the day-dreaming that has become her life. How can we fail to lament the inevitable deterioration of character and the unsuitability of such a life as a preparation for marriage!

In connection with women's work in the factory, the author mentions, as it were in passing, the fact that they are not interested in trade unions, and that they should be encouraged to join them. This seems to us a very important point, capable of much expansion, and a practical matter for the consideration of Australian educators, who will need no urging to see that girls in their last year in primary school should be made familiar with the benefits of the trade union movement, and made to realise that the union concerns vitally each working-girl. Enslavement by the machine is the threat hanging over each one of them.

Another important point to which the author devotes only a few

lines (it is difficult for him to do more; that is why this book is one for discussion); that point is the beautification of the homes of working-people. He remarks that they are being moved out of drab slum dwellings, but that little is being done to beautify them within. Again, we move into the realm of the school-world, where chemistry and mathematics might well give place to a course in home-making. The world is in need of homes and of family life, yet, until quite recently, and then only in some schools, girls have passed on to the office or factory without being given one lesson on how to make a home.

Father Fitzsimons goes far beyond the few practical points here discussed, and as he comes towards the end of his book he shows his esteem of womanhood in saying that in woman is hidden strength, fortified and purified by grace, which can face up to new circumstances and new problems with tranquility.

M.O.

\* \* \* \*

THE DIVINIZATION OF MAN ACCORDING TO SAINT HILARY OF POITIERS, by Philip T. Wild. Mundelein, Illinois, U.S.A. 1950. Pp. 168.

This doctorate-thesis does not aim merely at expounding St. Hilary's theory of man's divinization. Rather the author wishes to investigate what resemblance there is between St. Hilary and the divinization theory so characteristic of Greek theology. And this question must be asked about St. Hilary. For he is a Western Father who had extensive contacts with the East and underwent a profound Greek influence.

The author goes to work in practical and scholarly fashion. He outlines the salient features of the Greek theory of divinization. Then he examines Hilary's chief works à propos of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost, adoptive sonship, union with God through Faith and certain Sacraments, and Hilary's insistence that our divinization (through conformity with Christ, immortality, assimilation to God) is above all in heaven. Finally the author compares and contrasts Hilary's teaching with that of the Greeks.

The upshot of reading this well-documented thesis is to discourage you from reading Hilary further. And that unhappy fruit is not due to the defects of the author, but to those of St. Hilary, whose writings are so faithfully analysed.

Indeed, St. Hilary comes out very poorly from the comparison with the Greek Fathers. To anyone who knows the rich and magnificent Greek theology, Hilary's thought will seem barren and jejune. Take for



example, the doctrine of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The only attractive element that St. Hilary stresses is the Holy Ghost's role as illuminator (and that, of course, is a valuable point that is traditional and nobly emphasised in the Liturgy, for example, in the prayers for Candlemas). But about the Holy Ghost's indwelling us to sanctify us, about his *personal* presence in the just man—about that doctrine that is such a rich axiomatic truth for St. Cyril of Alexandria and other Greeks, there is little in St. Hilary.

Again, as the author abundantly proves, St. Hilary changes the focus from this life to the next. The Greeks made the divinization a tremendous reality *here* on earth; the supernatural life here is in their theology already, 'inchoatio formalis gloriae'. For St. Hilary, our divinization is almost entirely in heaven. St. Hilary is frankly disappointing; our supernatural life here on earth is represented by him as shorn of many of its most consoling and attractive elements.

The author of this thesis deserves praise for his solid, painstaking study of St. Hilary. His aim is clearly stated at the beginning and carefully followed throughout the work. Where the interpretation of St. Hilary's thought is difficult, he always displays prudence of judgment. The arrangement and printing of the thesis are all that could be desired.

Nevertheless, this is a tedious work. The chief reason for that has already been indicated: St. Hilary himself is disappointing. Another reason arises from the analytic method adopted to get at St. Hilary's thought on the various facets of divinization. And a third reason is that the style lacks all grace. Moreover, from time to time, one is jolted by awkward sentences such as this:

'The newly reborn Christian, as all infants, is weak and tender . . . ' (Page 103).

There are not a few passages that Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch might gleefully pounce on as samples of what he calls 'jargon'.

J.P.K.

\*

\*

\*

\*

THE GRACE OF GUADALUPE, by Frances Parkinson Keyes. Burns, Oates, 1951. 150 pp. 10/6 (Eng.).

On at least one day in every year the two Americas are drawn together in a special bond; that day is the 12th December, feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, to whom Mrs. F. P. Keyes has paid a devoted tribute in this interesting book. As she is an intelligent woman (let the epithet stand in spite of her novels) with a cultivated mind that deeply appreciates the treasures of her recently found Catholic Faith,

she was the right choice for a publisher wishing to give us the story of the Heavenly Queen of Mexico. She tells us a great deal about the Mexican devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe when she tells one incident in the introduction to her book: While marvelling at the murals of that astonishing artist, Diego Rivera, she noticed a blank, blurred space in which you could dimly discern the small, veiled figure of a woman. Wondering, she asked for an explanation. "The figure which you cannot see, senora, is that of the Virgin of Guadalupe. At least, it was". Then follows the story of how a few men, though devoted to Rivera (the people's painter), stole in one night with acid in their hands, and threw it on the figure which Rivera had painted with hateful irreverence. "They will not allow even Diego Rivera to belittle or cheapen her by so much as an inference".

This national pride of the Mexicans in their Heavenly Mother is so deeply rooted in their history that it is rather a hereditary instinct than a conscious pride. Only the educated among them would realise this—realise, also, that the Mexican devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe has an eternal quality, for it was she who made Mexico. In the first place, until her apparition to a poor Indian in the early years of the sixteenth century, Christianity made no headway among the Indians, who were the sole inhabitants of the country being conquered and colonised by the Spaniards. The Spanish rule may have been, on the whole, humane—in its first centuries; but it is not surprising that the religion of the conquerors made little appeal to the dispossessed. Then came Our Lady, beautiful, tender, dark little lady—their Lady and Mother, to lead them to her Son, and to pour a shining light over their drab lives. The Spanish rulers, be it said to their credit, joined in the cult, building a beautiful basilica and showing great honour to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

From then on, at every crisis of their history, the Mexicans have enjoyed the maternal care of their Lady, and it was under her banner that they went into battle against their Spanish rulers, grown effete and tyrannical in the early years of the nineteenth century. "My children", cried the priest Miguel Hidalgo, leading his sorely tried people in revolt, "this is the day of a new dispensation. Are you ready for freedom? Will you redeem your own land? . . . Down with an evil Government! Long live Mexico! Long live Our Lady of Guadalupe!" Recalling such events, we realise that she is not only a Lady devoutly to be revered; she is the Greatest Lady in Mexico. In vain will men like Diego Rivera try to take her out of the hearts of her people. M.O